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TOURISM

MARCH 1995
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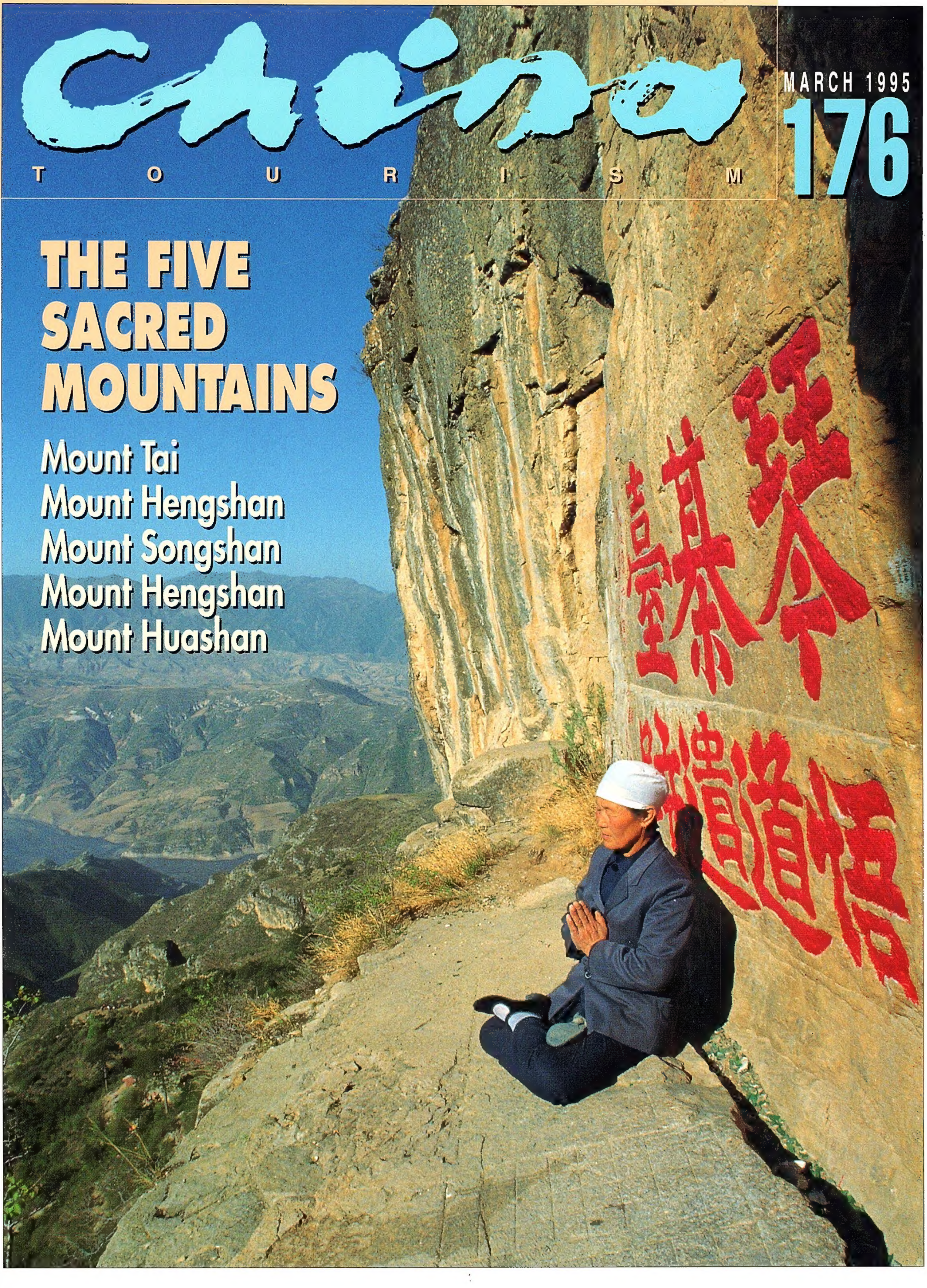

THE FIVE SACRED MOUNTAINS

Mount Tai
Mount Hengshan
Mount Songshan
Mount Hengshan
Mount Huashan

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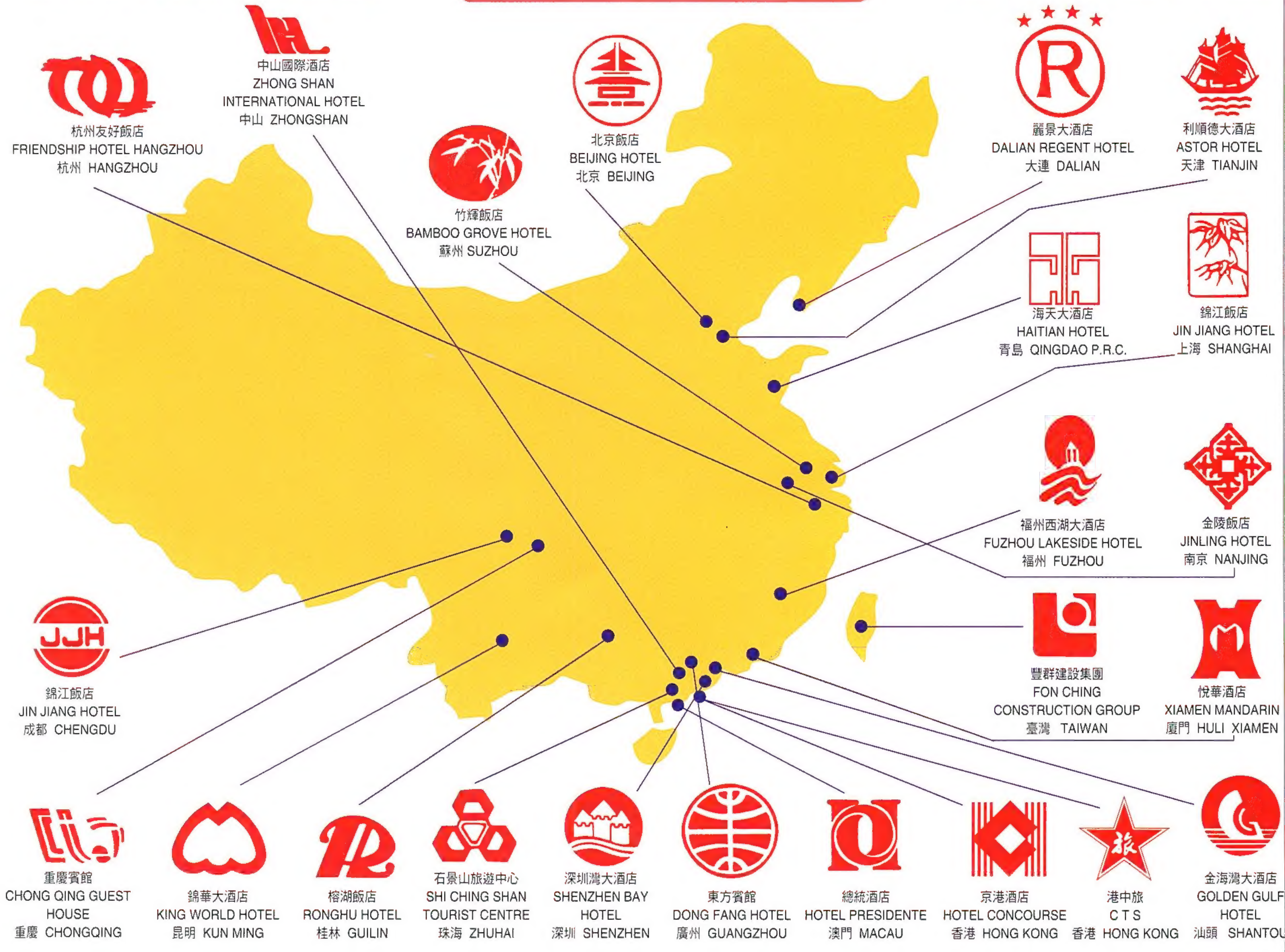
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EDITORIAL

The Five Sacred Mountains

Walking, sitting, standing, reclining and flying — these are just some of the words used to describe the shapes of Mount Tai, Hengshan (衡山), Huashan, Songshan and Hengshan (恆山), which are popularly known as the Five Sacred Mountains in China.

China is well-known for its beautiful and scenic mountain ranges where, geographically, mountains dominate one third of the land area. The history behind the naming of the Five Sacred Mountains originated from Emperor Xuandi of the Han Dynasty, who in 61 B.C. promulgated the imperial edit to determine the east, central, south, west and north mountains as Mount Tai, Songshan, Tianzhu, Huashan and Hengshan respectively. These names have been handed down virtually unchanged apart from Tianzhu which was replaced by Mount Hengshan (衡山) in the Sui Dynasty (581-618).

Moreover, there is also a political side behind the history of these names. China's feudal emperors had often used the mountains as four borders, marking territory, when they were thus known as the Four Sacred Mountains. The later formation of the fifth mountain, chosen from the central region, came about to symbolize the capital of the country. Emperors of successive dynasties performed elaborate sacrificial ceremonies honouring the Five Sacred Mountains.

Without doubt then, the Five Sacred Mountains are China's most famous group of mountains, and deeply rooted as part of China's national heritage. Each mountain commands its own exquisite and unrivalled beauty, making the Five Sacred Mountains a must for tourists from home and far abroad.

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Mount Tai : Crown of the Five Sacred Mountains 8

Photos by Peng Zhen Ge
Article by Liu Shui & An Ge

Located in eastern China Mount Tai is known as the Crown of the Five Sacred Mountains. For its unique natural and cultural conditions, it is listed as "a cultural heritage of the world natural and human history" by the United Nations.

Mount Hengshan: Like a Bird About to Take Wing 26

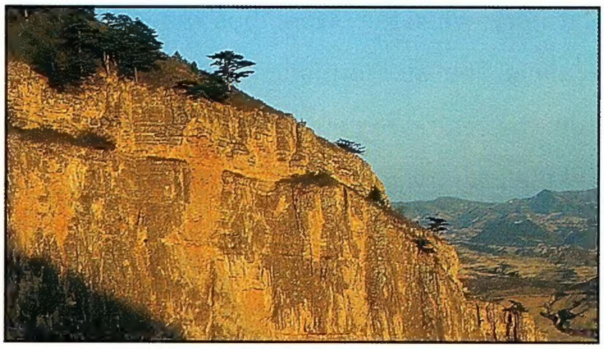
Photos & Article by Xie Guanghui

Mount Hengshan stands in the south, hence its other name the South Mountain. Ancient temples, towers, pavilions, stone sculptures and inscribed tablets can be found everywhere on the mountain.

Mount Songshan: A Colossal Dragon in Sleep 42

Article by Shu Feng

Lying in central China Mount Songshan is composed of two mountains: the Taishi and the Shaoshi, each with 36 peaks. The Shaolin Temple on the northern slope of the Shaoshi Mountain is famous for its martial arts throughout the world.



Mount Hengshan: Ranging Like a File 58

Article by Shan Xiaogang

Regarded as the First Mountain Beyond the Great Wall, the North Mountain Hengshan has many perilous passes often contested by strategists in the past. A 1,000-year-old pine tree still grows luxuriantly on the mountain.

Mount Huashan: Standing Erect Like a Brush Pen 72

Article by Bao Xiu

Mount Huashan has been a famous tourist attraction for its magnificence and perilousness. As the saying goes, "There's only one path leading to Mount Huashan since ancient times." So tourists to this mountain should be fully prepared beforehand.

THE FIVE SACRED MOUNTAINS

Mount Tai: Crown of the Five Sacred Mountains 8
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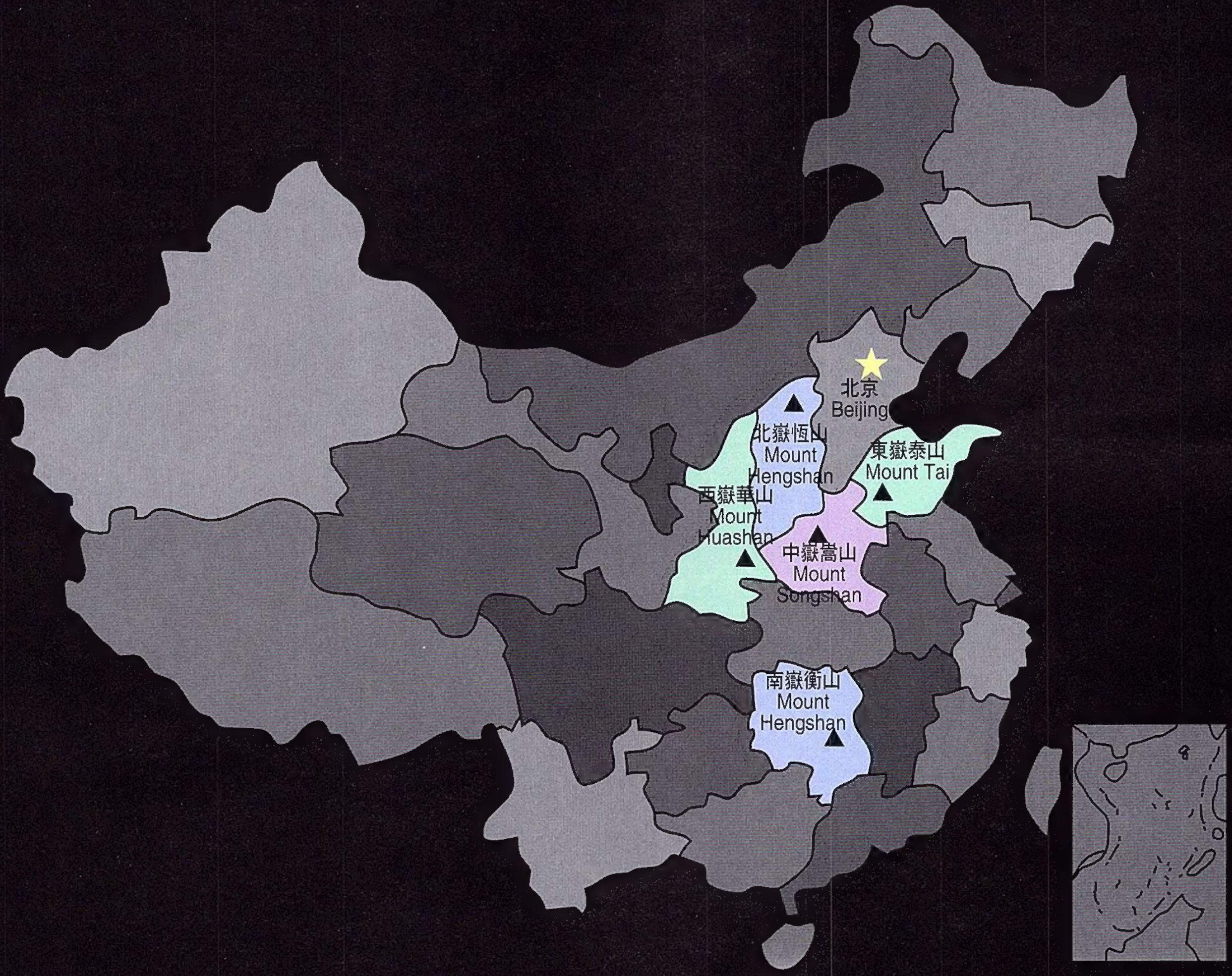
Front Cover: A pious Taoist follower sits in meditation on the Zither and Chess Terrace on the North Mountain Hengshan in northern Shanxi Province *(by Shan Xiaogang)*.

The Five Sacred Mountains

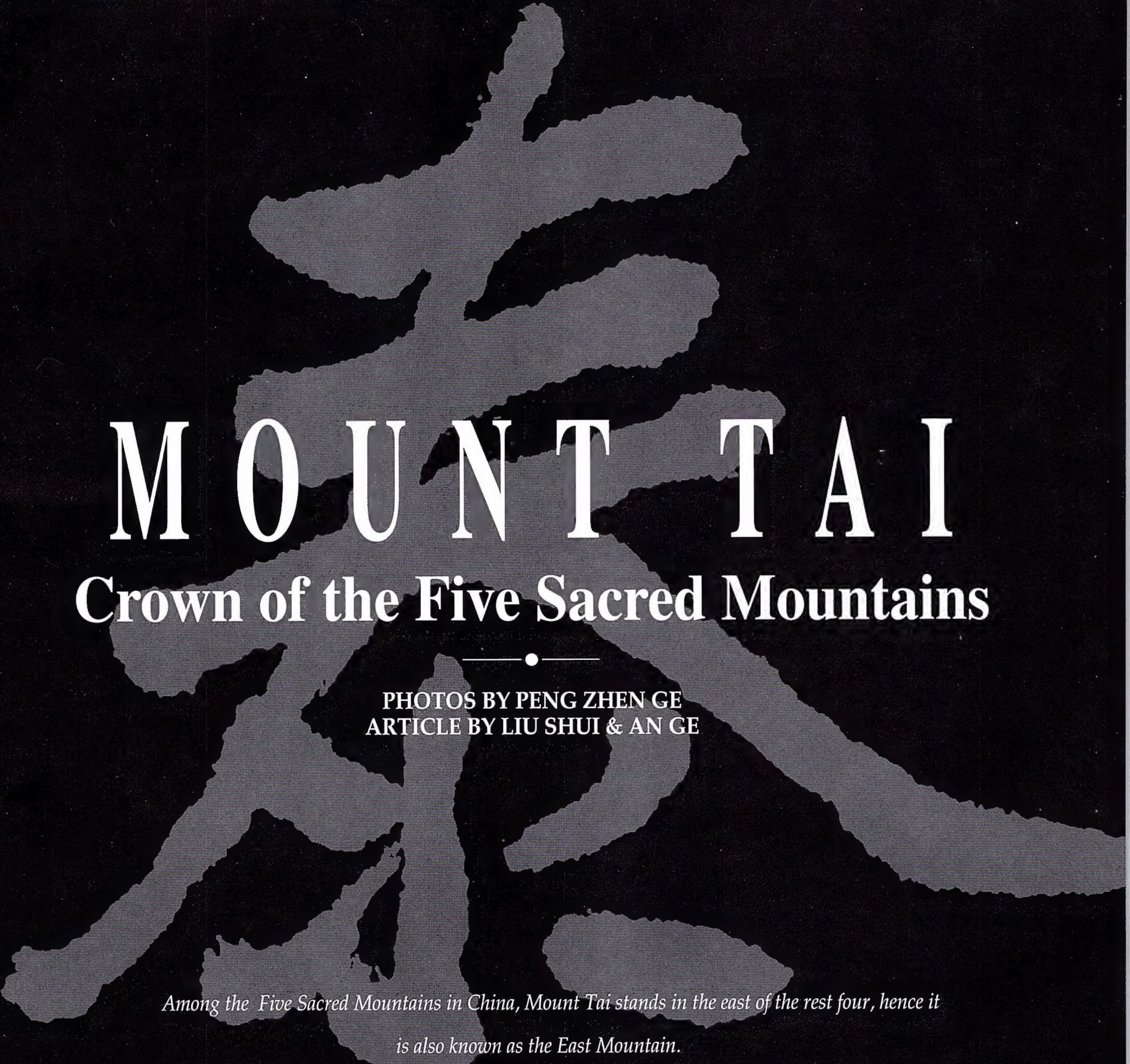


China boasts a great number of mountains, not a few of which are more than several thousand metres high. The five most famous ones, namely Mount Tai, Mount Hengshan (衡山), Mount Songshan, Mount Hengshan (恆山) and Mount Huashan, are indispensable for tourists who intend to make a trip to see mountains in China. All the five mountains are renowned for their mysterious colour. Legend has it that when Pangu (a legendary figure who was believed to have separated heaven from earth) died, his body turned into five mountains: the head became the East Mountain Taishan, the belly the Central Mountain Songshan, the left arm the South Mountain Hengshan, the right arm the North Mountain Hengshan and the feet the West Mountain Huashan. Apart from the many myths related to them, these mountains, due to their geographical locations, are also important symbols of the country.

Each of the five mountains has distinctive features of its own: Mount Tai looks like a majestic seated Buddha; Mount Huashan resembles an upright brush pen, precipitous and spectacular; Mount Songshan lies like a reclining dragon staring at the vast land of the Central Plains; Mount Hengshan with 108 peaks located north of the Great Wall ranges like marching soldiers in file; Mount Hengshan stretching 400 kilometres in the south is in the shape of a giant bird ready to take wing. The five mountains provide the tourist with varied scenes such as a sea of clouds, strangely-shaped rocks, unique valleys, waterfalls and springs, and different sites for watching the sunrise from different angles.

The fertile cultural sources in these areas have personified the Five Sacred Mountains, which are the origins of the Chinese people and their civilization. From the Yellow Emperor to the monarches of the various dynasties all came to worship the five mountains. Ministers, officials, generals and men of letters visited the sites, and Taoist and Buddhist culture developed depending on the reputation of the mountains. Consequently visitors find temples, monasteries and other historic sites and valuable cultural relics everywhere in these areas, which are essential components of traditional Chinese culture.

A visit to the Five Sacred Mountains is not only an enjoyment of the picturesque scenery but also an opportunity for one to understand more about Chinese history.



MOUNT TAI

Crown of the Five Sacred Mountains

PHOTOS BY PENG ZHEN GE
ARTICLE BY LIU SHUI & AN GE

Among the Five Sacred Mountains in China, Mount Tai stands in the east of the rest four, hence it is also known as the East Mountain.

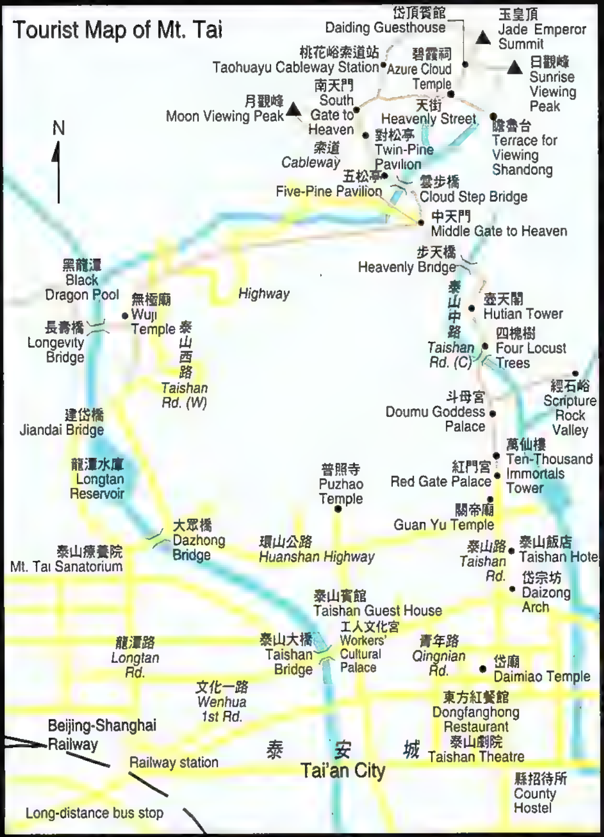
Rising 1,546 metres above sea level, the mighty Mount Tai rises abruptly on the plain of the East Shandong Peninsula, as if the rock body shoots right into the sky.

Of the Five Great Mountains, Mount Tai enjoyed more reverence and fondness of emperors of various dynasties. It is said that ever from the Yellow Emperor of the primitive China onward, 72 rulers of different dynastic periods came to the mountain to meet with dukes and secured their ruling position. From the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), emperors of every dynasty never failed to come and offer sacrifices to Mount Tai.

Ordinary people, too, have a special respect and love for the mountain. Both Buddhist and Taoist believers have had temples built on the mountain and at its foot. Scholars of different times have had an even more professed reverence for the mountain. Confucius, for one, left behind this saying: "Ascend Mount Tai to dwarf the world." Later, Sima Qian a. 145 BC-?), Li Bai (701-762), Du Fu (712-770) and Su Dongpo (1037-1101) all came and were inspired to write poems dedicated to the mountain.

The unique natural and cultural environment on Mount Tai have made it a famous tourist attraction, listed as a "cultural heritage of the world natural and human history".

Viewed from below the Path of Eighteen Bends, the South Gate to Heaven seems to be hanging in the sky.


Tourist Map of Mt. Tai
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玉皇頂
Jade Emperor Summit
桃花峪索道站
Taohuayu Cableway Station
碧霞祠
Azure Cloud Temple
日觀峰
Sunrise Viewing Peak
南天門
South Gate to Heaven
月觀峰
Moon Viewing Peak
天街
Heavenly Street
瞻魯台
Terrace for Viewing Shandong
對松亭
Twin-Pine Pavilion
索道
Cableway
五松亭
Five-Pine Pavilion
雲步橋
Cloud Step Bridge
中天門
Middle Gate to Heaven
步天橋
Heavenly Bridge
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無極廟
Wuji Temple
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The God of Mount Tai was revered by Taoists as the Heavenly King. Later it was regarded by emperors as the Great King of Mount Tai (by Zhang Guangping).

It is the most important thing for visitors to Mount Tai to view the sunrise on the summit (by Zhang Rendong).

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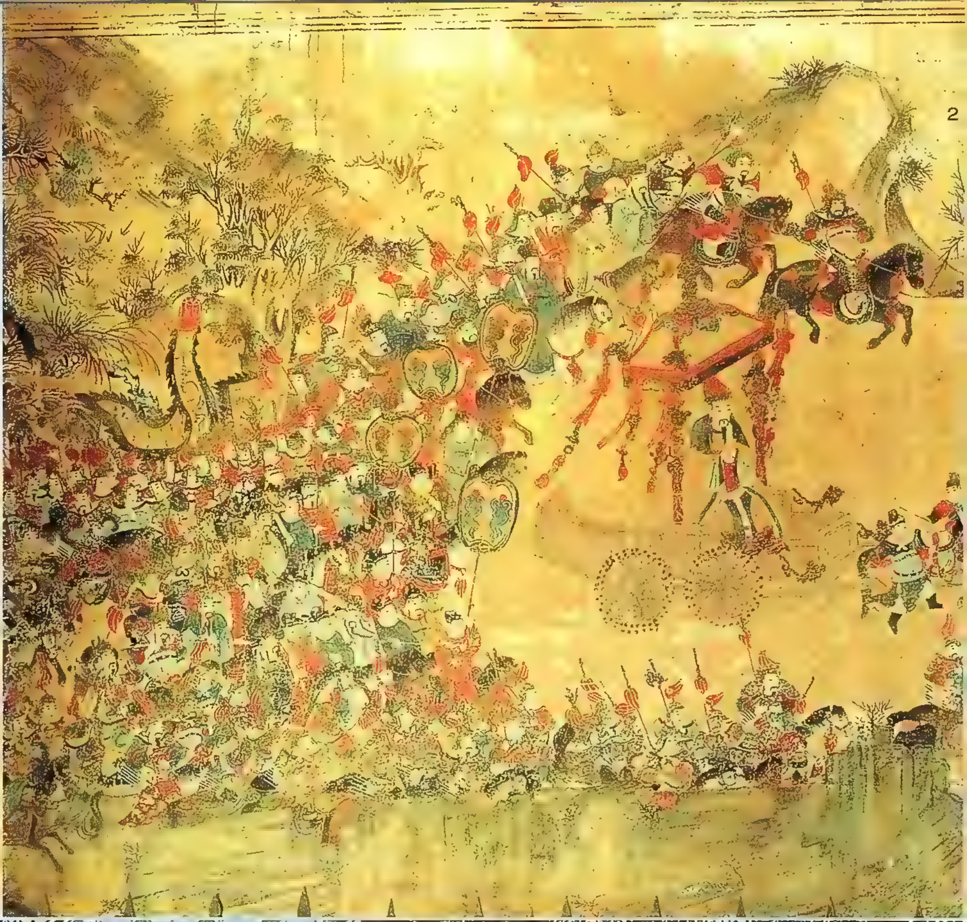
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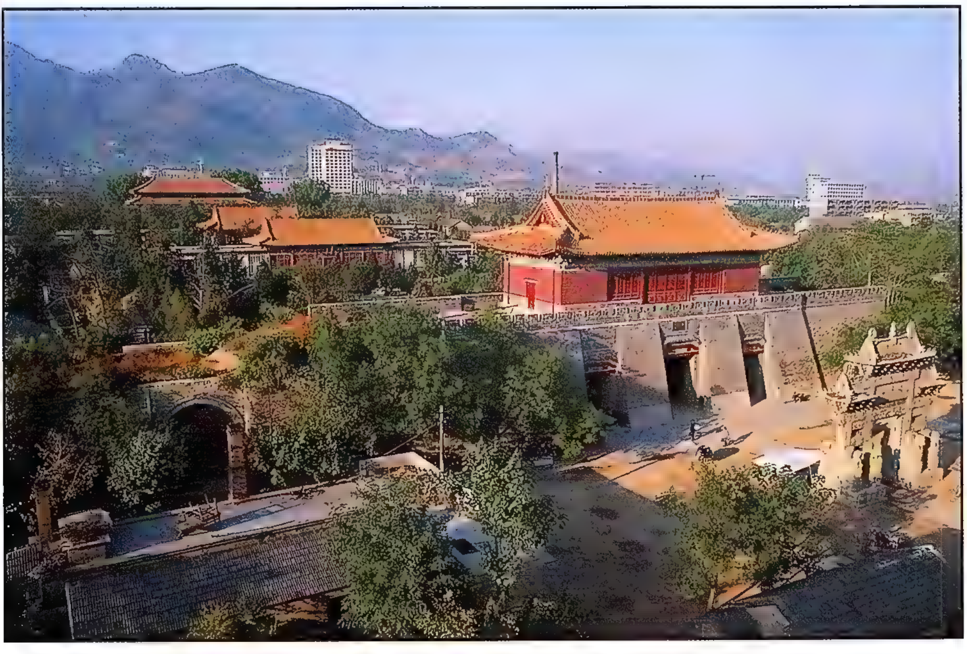
Taking a south-bound train from Jinan, capital of Shandong Province, we arrived in Tai'an City at dusk after a half-day ride. Mount Tai is located right in Tai'an City.

The central axis of the Temple of Mount Tai (or Daimiao Temple) is directly in line with the South Gate to Heaven on Daiding (the peak of the mountain). Standing on the roof of the Tai'an Hotel, I looked north and saw the towering Mount Tai in the distance. Through the buildings of various heights in the city, I easily found the Temple of Mount Tai which seemed more like a royal palace in architectural style. Also known as the East Mountain Temple, it was where emperors and kings used to offer sacrifices to the God of Mount Tai. According to historical documents, buildings for sacrificial ceremonies already existed during the Qin and Han (221 B.C.-A.D. 220) dynasties. The five sturdy aged cypress trees in the Han-dynasty Cypress Courtyard are said to have been planted by Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty. During the reign of Xuanhe (1120-1123) of the Song Dynasty, there were altogether 813 bays of halls, houses and corridors in the temple. Such a size was similar to the architectural layout of the royal palace.

The temple covers an area of 96,000 square metres and the surrounding wall is 10 metres high and 1.5 kilometres long. Buildings on the central axis are the Yaocan Pavilion, Zhengyang Gate, Peitian (Auxiliary Heavenly) Gate, Ren'an (Benevolent Peace) Gate, Tiankuang (Heavenly Bestowed) Hall, the Living Quarters Palace and the Houzai Gate. This central axis is connected with the ancient path leading up the mountain and faces the Path of Eighteen Bends and the South Gate to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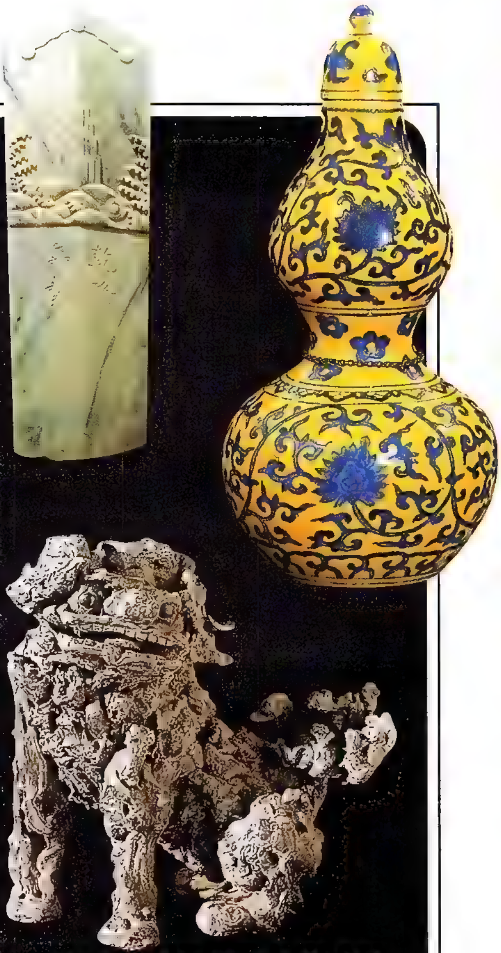

The exhibition room in the East Royal Palace of the Temple of Mount Tai has a display of precious cultural relics. The most attractive are the "Three Treasures of Mount Tai": the eaglewood lions, the ceremonial jade tablet and the yellow and blue glazed porcelain gourd. The two lions are carved out of eaglewood burls, each weighing more than four kilogrammes. The ceremonial jade tablet weighs 20 kilogrammes. Both the lions and the jade tablet were presents from Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty. The porcelain gourd was made specially for the God of Mount Tai during the reign of Jiajing (1522-1566) of the Ming Dynasty.

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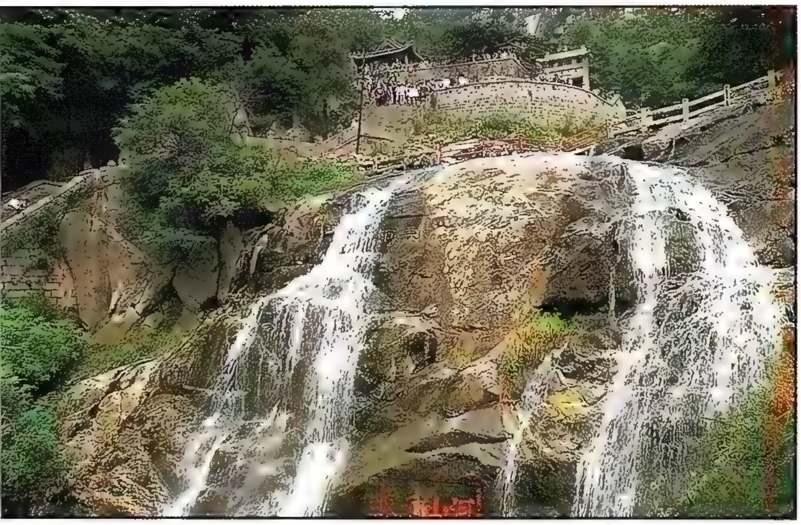
1. This column carved with Buddhist sutra is believed to date from the pre-Tang period.
2. In the Heavenly Bestowed Hall is a huge mural 3.3 metres wide and 62 metres long. It discloses was the scene when emperors came to offer sacrifices at Mount Tai (by Song Qizhong).
3. People restage the sacrificial ceremonies used to be held by emperors during the Song Dynasty (by Song Qizhong).
4. This 2,100-year-old cypress tree is said to have been personally planted by Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty.
5. The handwriting of Prime Minister Li Si of the Qin Dynasty is a treasure of ancient Chinese calligraphy (by Zhang Rendong).
6. Zhengyang Gate of the Temple of Mount Tai
7. The Temple of Mount Tai, enjoys a typical layout design of a royal palace.



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1. *Mountain water cascades underneath the Cloud Step Bridge (by Zhang Rendong).*
2. *A present-day"little emperor" touring the mountain (by Zhang Rendong)*
3. *Cable cars take visitors between the Middle Gate to Heaven to the South Gate to Heaven.*
4. *Often tourists are carried over the Path of Eighteen Bends in sedan-chairs.*

2

Heaven on the top of the mountain, an arrangement which adds much grandeur to the temple. On the eastern side of the central axis of the temple are the Han-dynasty Cypress Courtyard and East Royal Palace, and on the west, the Tang-dynasty Locust Courtyard and the Rain and Flower Taoist Court.

The Huge Mural in the Heavenly Bestowed Hall

The Heavenly Bestowed Hall, first built in 1009, stands on the spacious Morning Due Terrace surrounded with green cypress and pine trees. The octagonal nine-bay hall is topped with a roof of yellow glazed tiles and double eaves. Eight thick vermillion pillars with colour paintings support the roof through bracket sets. This magnificent structure, the Hall of Supreme Harmony in the Forbidden City in Beijing and the Grand Hall in the Temple of Confucius in Shandong's Qufu are together known as the three great ancient palatial structures in China.

Once inside the hall, what meets the eye is the God of Mount Tai. In a royal ceremonial robe and holding a jade tablet in one hand he looks as stately as a royal king. The walls on three sides of the hall show a huge mural portraying the mountain god on an inspection tour. Sitting on a jade cart, the serene-looking god is accompanied with generals and court ministers as they march in a grand procession. This mural, 3.3 metres wide and 62 metres long, is a masterpiece from the Song Dynasty (960-1279).

In the temple, a great attraction is the collection of stone tablets with carvings from different dynasties. The oldest one is called the "Mount Tai Stone Carving of the Qin Dynasty" in the East Royal Palace. Located near the Jade Lady Pond on the summit of the mountain, it was erected in 219 B.C. to commemorate the sacrificial trip made by the First Emperor of Qin. Characters were added to the tablet through the dynasties to amount 222 at one time. Due to natural and man-made calamities through a period of more than 2,200 years, however, only 10 characters remain today. The "Twin Tablets", commonly referred to as the "Lovers Tablets" were erected by a Taoist monk acting on instructions by Empress Wu Zetian (624-705) of the Tang Dynasty. Two long pieces of stone were stood next to each other on a common foundation and crowned with a common top. They are said to be a symbol of the lasting love between the emperor and empress.

The Real Pleasure in the Ascent

At the Temple of Mount Tai, I ran into an old friend of mine who had just come down from the mountain. According to him, the "magnificence" of Mount Tai can be best felt when one stands on the summit commanding a panoramic view, but the "real wonder" of the mountain can be best appreciated all the way up the mountain. He advised me not to take the cable car in order not to miss the pleasure of the "real wonder".

The starting point for the climb is the First Heavenly Gate, which is seven kilometres from the Jade Emperor Summit. The climb means to measure the distance by negotiating the 7,000 stairs leading to the summit. Three stone arches stand at the First Heavenly Gate, respectively carved with a horizontal inscription at the top, announcing "Heavenly Stairs", "Site of Confucius' Visit" and "First Heavenly Gate".

Crossing the First Heavenly Gate, we came to the Red Gate Palace which straddles the mountain path. The west courtyard on the left side of the path houses Bixia (Azure Cloud) Lady, more commonly known as the "Granny of Mount Tai". The east courtyard on the right, called the Maitreya Courtyard, has a Costume Changing Pavilion where the nobility used to stop for a break or change clothes during their climb. Leaving the Red Gate Palace we immediately found ourselves in a grove of cypress and pine trees. Accompanied by gurgling spring waters and singing birds, we passed the Ten-Thousand Immortals Tower and came to Doumu Goddess Palace.

Outside the palace is an aged locust tree dating back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). To the east of the palace is the Main Stream. Sitting in the Mountain Villa for Listening to the Gurgling Spring or leaning the railing of the Cloud Lingering Tower one can enjoy the cascades of the Three-Pool Waterfalls below. In the past, the goddess mother of the Big Dipper was worshipped in the palace. Later when the statue of the goddess was destroyed, her place was taken by the Goddess of Mercy. The

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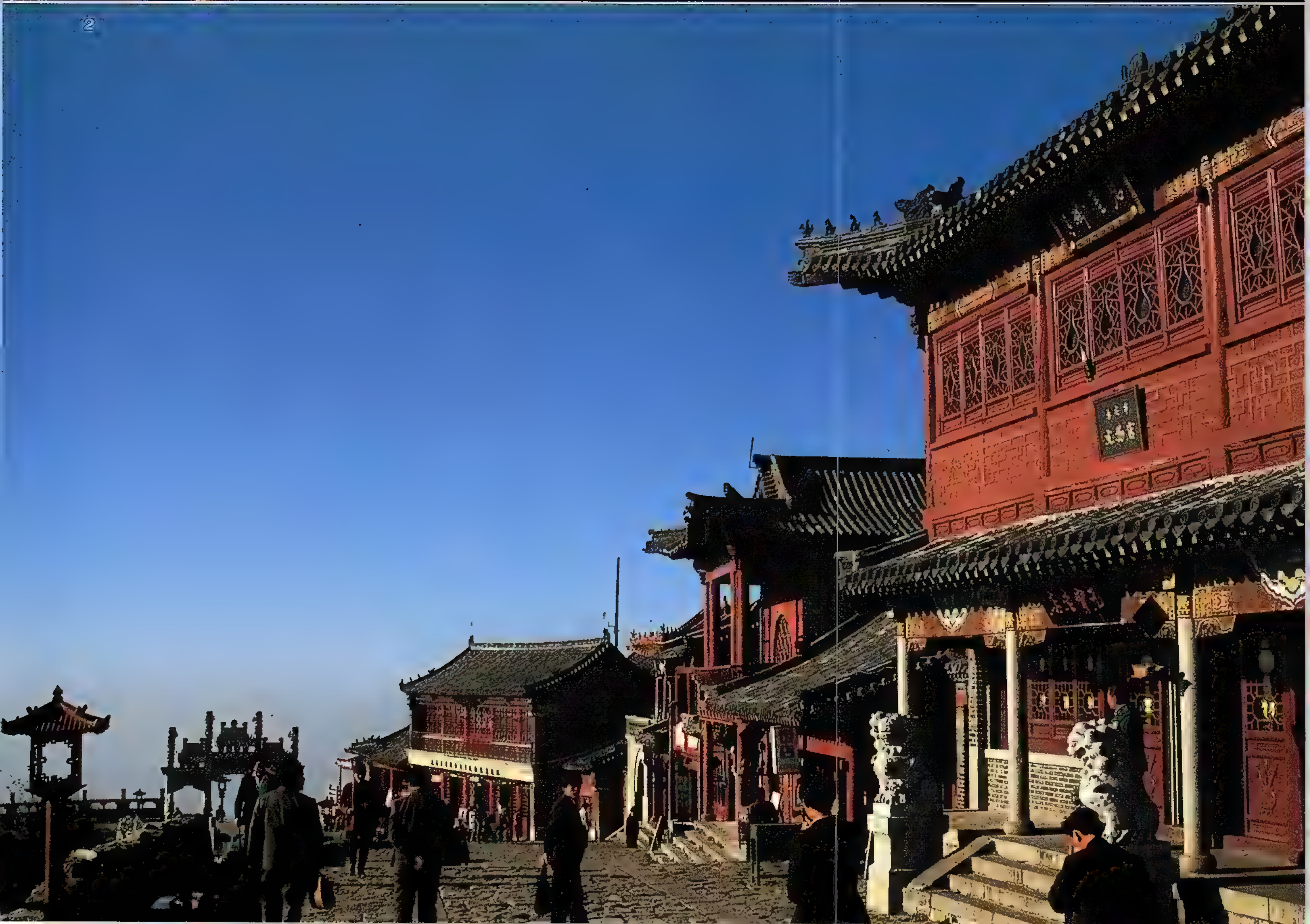

quiet Scripture Rock Valley northeast of Doumu Goddess Palace is surrounded by mountains on three sides. On a vast rock surface in the spacious valley is carved the Vajracchedika Sutra in huge, vigorous characters of the official script.

Returning to the mountain path from the Scripture Rock Valley, we came to a place called Cypress Cave. As the name implies, this is a grove of cypress and pine trees. There is also a spot called the Four Locust Trees. One of the four giant old trees has already withered, two are full of vitality and the fourth one leans over the mountain path. Pedestrians can walk underneath the thick tree trunk about two metres in diameter. Here, we stopped to have tea at a teahouse by the road side. Hung under the eaves of this thatched teahouse are tree root carvings of various shapes and images. In fact, the tables and chairs in the teahouse are made with tree roots, branches and barks. The host brought us tea as red as the colour of dates known as "Tea for the Daughter of Mount Tai".

We then continued to climb along the path with many turns and twists, passing the Hutian Pavilion, the Horse Returning Ridge and the Heavenly Bridge before we finally arrived at the Middle Gate to Heaven. Also called the Second Heavenly Gate, it marks the converging point of the east and west paths leading to the mountain summit. People both going up and coming down Mount Tai invariably go through this spot, rendering the place hustling and bustling with life.

Once at the Middle Gate to Heaven, we could already see the South Gate to Heaven in the distance. Though many people went to take the cable car further up, we, challenged and induced by the Path of Eighteen Bends veiled in clouds, decided to continue on foot.

We easily passed the "Happy Three Miles" and came to the Cloud Step Bridge. North of the bridge are mountain cliffs where during rainy season a waterfall appears, cascading into the valley. Walking on the bridge is as if walking in the sky. Atop the cliff is the Royal Camp Rock.

According to a story, when Emperor Zhenzong (r. 998-1022) of the Song Dynasty came to make sacrifices to the mountain god, he was so overwhelmed by the scenery that he had a camping tent built on a rock to stay and enjoy the beauty of nature, listening to the spring waters and watching the moon, reluctant to leave.

Across the bridge, we saw the famous Wudaifu Pines. The *Records of the Historian* writes that when the First Emperor of Qin visited Mount Tai, he was caught by a torrential rain half way up the mountain and was only saved by taking shelter under five pine trees. He thus conferred the title of "Five Senior Officials" to the pines. Unfortunately, the original pines had been washed away by mountain torrents during the reign of Emperor Wanli of the Ming Dynasty. The two trees still alive were planted during the Qing Dynasty. By the pines is the Five-Pine Pavilion and behind it on an elevated spot is another sturdy ancient pine whose long branches fall down as if reaching out its arms to welcome visitors, hence the name "Guest Welcoming Pine".

Emperor Qianlong's Six Ascents of the Summit

Having crossed the Chaoyang Cave we came to the Twin-Pine Peak. Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736-1795) of the Qing Dynasty visited Mount Tai 11 times and ascended the summit on six of these trips, leaving behind more than 170 poems admiring the mountain. The one about the Chaoyang Cave was carved on the cliffs northeast of the cave. Described as the Lofty Tablet, it can be seen even from the city of Tai'an. The Twin-Pine Pavilion offers a wide field of vision of luxuriant pine groves. Climbing over the Kaishan Mountain we were face to face with the Path of Eighteen Bends. To accumulate strength, climbers usually take a rest at the food stands beside the mountain path and have a typical Shandong-style snack consisting of a bowl of hot millet porridge and a pancake rolled with onions.

The Path of Eighteen Bends constitutes the most dangerous section of the climbing. Though less than one kilometre in length, there are 1,630 stairs, making the climb like ascending a huge ladder. Those who are scared of the climb often switch to sedan-chairs and be carried up the mountain. Often it is young visitors who choose to go by sedan-chairs, but old female pilgrims even with bound feet always insist on walking step by step to show their devotion and determination.

The section beyond the Ascending Immortal Arch is known as the "Steep Eighteen Bends". On its east side is the Flying Dragon Rock and on its west the Flying Phoenix Ridge. The mountain path meanders along the

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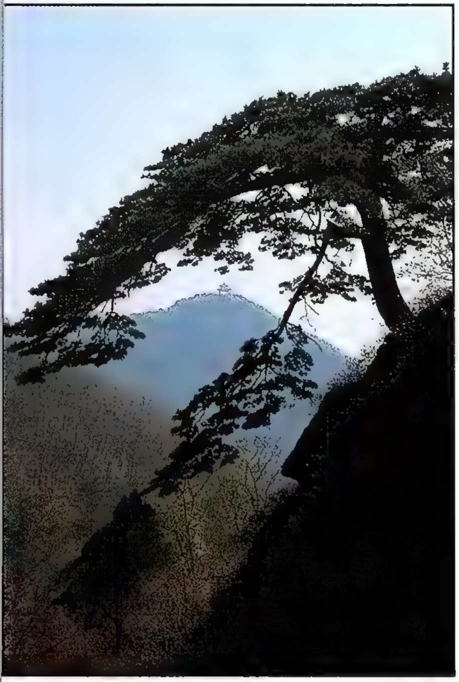

After going through the Twin-Pine Pavilion, the visitor following the twisting mountain path will suddenly find the Eighteen Bends like a sky ladder leading to the South Gate to Heaven. The path consists of three sections: from the Kaishan Mountain Pass to the original site of the Dragon Gate Arch with 393 stairs is the "Gentle Eighteen Bends"; the 676 stairs from the Dragon Gate Arch to the Ascending Immortal Arch is the "Neither-Gentle-Nor-Steep Eighteen Bends" and the 473 stairs to the South Gate to Heaven is the "Steep Eighteen Bends". Together they have 79 turnings and 1,633 stairs.

Also called the "Sky Ladder to the Heavenly Gate", the Path of Eighteen Bends is a typical landmark of Mount Tai.

1. The Summit of Mount Tai twinkles with lights as if a market in the heaven, when viewed from the Moon Viewing Pavilion at dusk.
2. The Heavenly Street that has been renovated is much more glamourous than 30 years ago.
3. The Guest Welcoming Pine on Mount Tai

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bottom of the valley. Viewed from below, the South Gate to Heaven seems as if it links the mountain and the sky together. Finally up at the South Gate to Heaven, people gasped and lay down on the ground in total exhaustion. When the mountain breeze had driven away the sweat, we looked up at the Path of Eighteen Bends, the rolling peaks, the city districts below and the Dawen River sparkling with light.

"Man's World in Heaven" on the Summit

From the South Gate to Heaven, we were already in the "Celestial Immortals' World". The South Gate to Heaven is not a big structure, probably built on purpose to accentuate the mighty body of the mountain, a design that reveals the wisdom of ancient architects. Beyond the gate is the Summit of Mount Tai, not to be mixed up with the actual summit where the Jade Emperor Summit, Sunrise Viewing Peak and Terrace for Viewing Shandong are located. It is known as the "Man's World in Heaven" which occupies an area of 0.6 square kilometres.

We climbed further upward and came to the Heavenly Street. On the northern side of the street are pavilions, towers, halls and terraces in ancient architectural style. There are also many hotels as well as a great number of restaurants and shops. Visitors can try the local delicacies, buy tourist souvenirs and resupply themselves with films. They can also rent cotton-padded overcoats there. Interestingly, every shop hangs on the door something like a treasure bottle, a gourd, a dust bin, a golden ox or a parrot. We walked into a shop with a shoe-shaped "gold ingot" on the door. It turned out to be an antique store. The shop owner explained that in the past those who came to offer sacrifices often were illiterate, and the objects hung on the door served as symbols of the business.

At the east end of the street, steep stairs lead to the summit. Half way on the path, we met women selling incense. They shoved sacrificial paper and incense into our hands,

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1. The archway at the Heavenly Street seems to lead to the sky.

2. The temple's paintings have an air of royal palaces.

3. The Azure Cloud Temple is a Taoist holy ground.

4. This copper tablet cast in the Ming Dynasty now stands in the Azure Cloud Temple.

5. The Azure Cloud Temple on the Summit of Mount Tai is a complex of magnificent ancient buildings.

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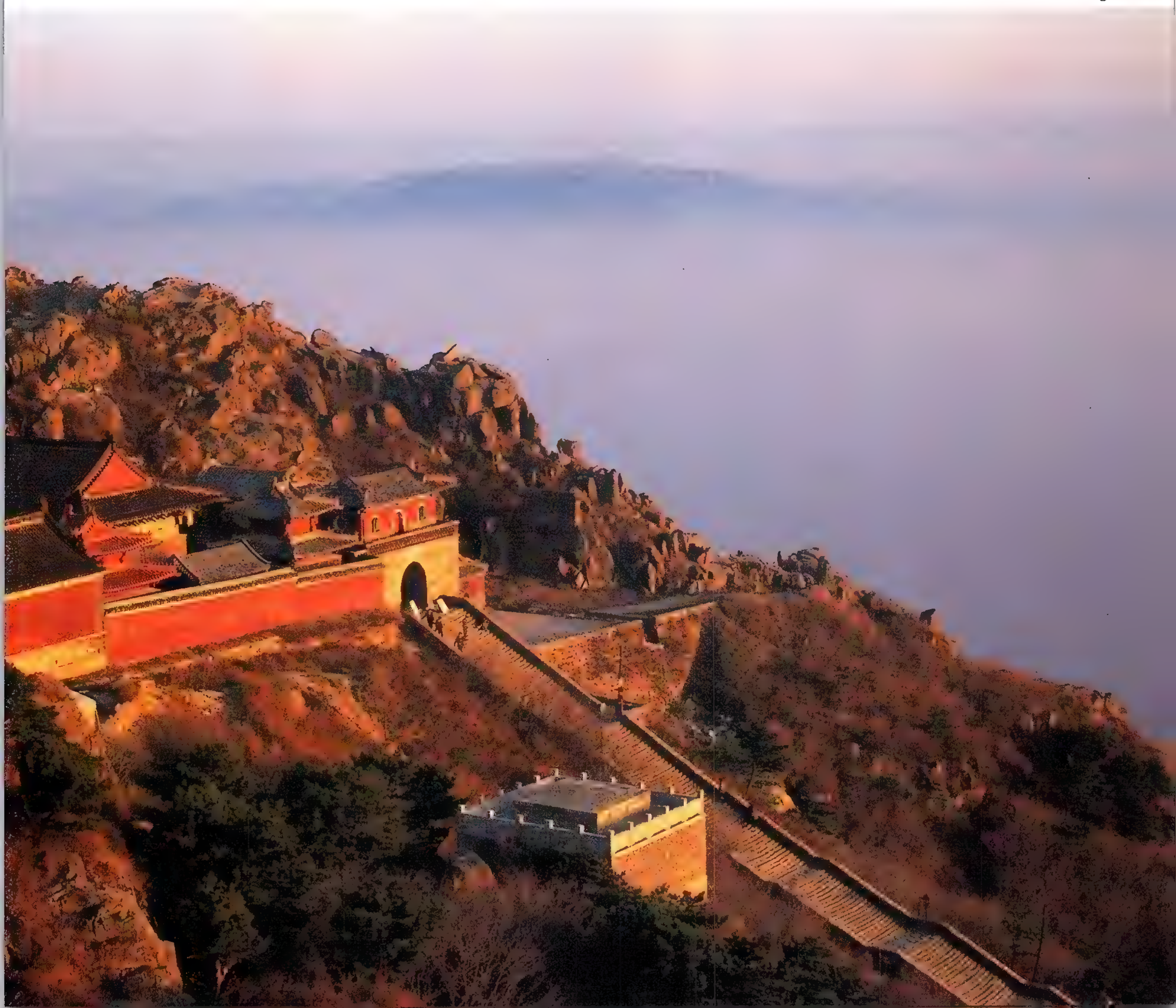

擎天捧日
登高

置身霄漢
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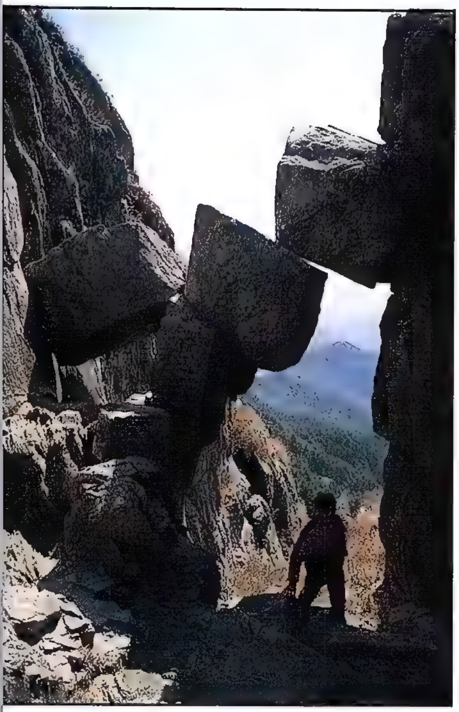

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saying: "Light a set of incense at the Granny Temple and pray to her for happiness and good health of your families...." The Granny Temple is also known as the Azure Cloud Temple. According to legend, when Emperor Zhenzong of the Song Dynasty came to wash his hands in the spring water on a sacrificial trip, a stone figure suddenly rose out of the water. He scooped it up and found it to be a ade statue of a lady. He then conferred it the itle "Heavenly Jade Lady" and had a temple built dedicated to her. Then in the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Hongwu (r. 1368-1398) gave the statue the name "Azure Cloud Lady" and after that the temple became busier with worshippers. Each year hundreds of thousands of pilgrims came to Mount Tai, bringing with them innumerous offerings such as gold, silver, precious stones, silk and satin, cloth and robes. Even these days, around the birthday of the goddess in spring, worshippers from all over the country offer sacrificial paper and incense to the goddess day and night.

The first thing that greets the eye after one enters the temple is the Fragrance Pavilion with an auxiliary hall on each side. The main hall has five rooms with carved beams and painted rafters. All the tile ends, 360 altogether, were cast from

In the Scripture Rock Valley about one kilometre northeast of Doumu Goddess Palace is a spacious rock slope of about 2,000 square metres. This natural rock slope is carved with 1,067 characters from the first volume of the Vajracchedika Sutra.

The characters look vigorous, natural and unrestrained, regarded by calligraphers throughout the history as a "masterpiece of calligraphy". They are believed to be a work of the Northern Qi period (550-577).

1. The cliffs across the mountain are left with inscriptions from various dynasties.
2. The famous cliff carvings at the foot of the Tianzhu (Heavenly Pillar) Peak at the Summit of Mount Tai record a 1,008-character inscription made by Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty.
3. Ancient mountain rocks have created many breath-taking "works of art".
4. One of the scenic sites with the characters meaning "Crown of the Five Sacred Mountains"

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泰山極頂
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copper and the number symbolize the 360 days in a lunar year. Incense smoke curls up in the centre of the hall, where the goddess is clad in a beautiful silk robe and her serene and kind face immediately arouses respect. Two young Taoist monks dutifully add incense into the burner from time to time. Some visitors throw money into the merit and virtue box and a monk strikes at his copper instrument whenever a contribution is made. It is said that the Buddhist halo often appears after a summer rain. Those who see the halo will meet with good fortune.

Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty and Mount Tai

The cliffs northeast of the Azure Cloud Temple are covered with carved characters in different scripts. The inscription of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty was completed in 726 when he came to worship the mountain. The 1,008-character inscription spreads out on a huge cliff more than 10 metres high. This ceremony of Emperor Xuanzong was the most elaborate in history. For example, more than 10,000 horses were employed on this occasion, organized into groups according to their colour. The guards of honour that greeted the emperor at the foot of the mountain stood in a line stretching nearly 100 kilometres.

We pushed more than 100 metres up and eventually had the pinnacle — the Jade Emperor Summit — under our feet. The Jade Emperor Temple on the summit is a quadrangle, the main hall of which houses the statue of the Jade Emperor. Compared with the Azure Cloud Temple, this one seems smaller but is more exquisitely built. On its east is the Sunrise Viewing Pavilion, and on its west, the River Viewing Pavilion.

It is said that when the weather is fine and the sky is clear, from the River Viewing Pavilion one can see the Yellow River more than 100 kilometres away. A rock surrounded with stone railings in the centre of the courtyard is called the Supreme Summit Rock, carved with the characters: "Supreme Summit of Mount Tai, 1,545 metres". Among the Five Great Mountains, Mount Tai is the third highest after Mount Huashan and Mount Hengshan. Then why does it enjoy the reputation of the "No. 1 Mountain Under Heaven" or the "Crown of the Five Great Mountains"? The answer is obvious: All emperors and kings in ancient China treated Mount Tai as being most sacred.

Viewing Sunrise at the Summit

At dawn when the east just turned pale, the Path of Eighteen Bends was already busy with moving shadows of visitors, who were making their way to the summit to see the sunrise. The quiet Heavenly Street became lively with footsteps and deep panting of the climbers. Those staying the night at the hotels on the mountain joined the ascending stream.

At the summit, the wind was strong, sending the bells hanging on the eaves of the halls in the Azure Cloud Temple jingling. People rented overcoats from roadside stands and hastily continued their way to the Sunrise Viewing Peak for an advantageous spot. When the sun began to appear, the mountain echoed with exclamation from the visitors. Very quickly quietness returned. The crowds standing around the Sunrise Viewing Pavilion fixed their eyes to the east with an anxious and solemn expression. If the weather is fine, the Yellow Sea more than 200 kilometres away can be viewed from this spot. When the sun gradually rose from the horizon of the sea, its colour turned from red to orange. As if they had suddenly woken up, the sunrise viewers hurriedly took photos with the rising sun as the background.

Since ancient times, emperors and common folks alike all held the Summit of Mount Tai as a sacred place. For thousands of years, kings and emperors even had the wheels of their chariots wrapped up with rice straw in order not to crush the grass and rocks on the mountain. Of course, they would not go in for large-scale construction on the summit. Consequently, the summit still obtains a primitive look, except the inscriptions carved on the rocks.

Translated by Huang Youyi

1. Red ribbons are tied on the trees at the Summit of Mount Tai by Buddhist followers as a sign of praying for plenty of children and good fortune.
2. The Father-in-Law Peak shrouded in morning mist
3. The Jade Emperor Summit commands the highest point at Mount Tai.
4. A stone tablet carved with the inscription "Supreme Summit of Mount Tai"

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MOUNT HENGSHAN

Like a Bird About to Take Wing

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY XIE GUANGHUI

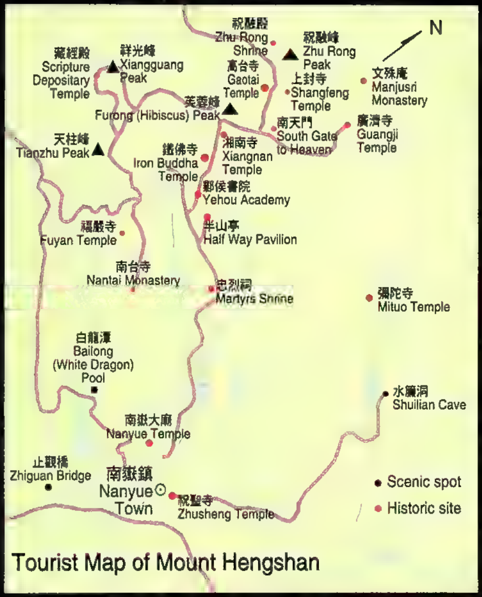
Mount Hengshan, located in the central Hunan Province, is also called the South Mountain or the South Sacred Mountain because it is the southernmost of the Five Sacred Mountains in the country. The word "Heng" refers to the constellations in the sky and means equilibrium or balance of opposing forces.

As a result of the powerful orogenic movements of the Himalayas, a fault developed in the granite stratum of southern Hunan more than three million years ago. The raised part of the earth's crust became today's Mount Hengshan. The rock stratum faulted not once but twice intermittently. After centuries' erosion by wind and rain, it became the mountain we see today.

Mount Hengshan extends for a distance of about 400 kilometres, with Goose Returning Peak in the city of Hengyang as its head and Yuelu Mountain in Changsha, the capital of Hunan, as its feet. There are altogether 72 peaks. Zhu Rong Peak, which rises to 1,290 metres above sea level in Hengshan County, is the main peak of the South Sacred Mountain and also the main tourist attraction. Mount Hengshan is different from the four other Sacred Mountains because of its unique shape. From a distance, the mountain looks like a bird about to take wing. The lofty Zhu Rong Peak forms the head of the bird, and Furong (Hibiscus), Tianzhu (Heavenly Pillar) and 14 other peaks, its body. Shilin (Stone Barn), Guanyin, Goose Returning and 17 other peaks in the south and Zigai, Incense Burner and 14 other peaks in the north are like the two wings of the bird.

On this famous mountain are 1,000-year-old ginkgoes and pines, exotic flowers and grass, eternally flowing waterfalls and springs, ancient temples with carved beams and painted pillars, as well as a large number of stone carvings and inscribed stone tablets dating from all ages. The exceptional attractions of Mount Hengshan have drawn many scholars and men of letters to it. Among them were Du Fu, Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan of the Tang Dynasty; Huang Tingjian, Zhao Bian, Hu Anguo, Zhu Xi and Zhang Shi of the Song; Zhan Ruoshui and Zhang Juzheng of the Ming, and Wang Fuzhi, Wei Yuan and Tan Citong of the Qing, who had, at one time or another, climbed or travelled to the South Sacred Mountain. Despite the fact that the great poet Li Bai of the Tang Dynasty had never been to the mountain, he wrote several poems about it. His poems have added colour to the famous mountain.

A dramatic view of the undulating Nanling Mountains from Sunrise Watching Terrace at the South Gate to Heaven



Tourist Map of Mount Hengshan

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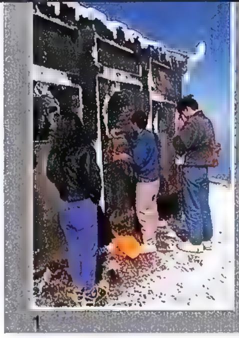
祝融殿
Zhu Rong Shrine
祝融峰
Zhu Rong Peak
藏經殿
Scripture Depositary Temple
祥光峰
Xiangguang Peak
高台寺
Gaotai Temple
上封寺
Shangfeng Temple
文殊庵
Manjusri Monastery
芙蓉峰
Furong (Hibiscus) Peak
南天門
South Gate to Heaven
廣濟寺
Guangji Temple
天柱峰
Tianzhu Peak
鐵佛寺
Iron Buddha Temple
湘南寺
Xiangnan Temple
鄴侯書院
Yehou Academy
半山亭
Half Way Pavilion
福嚴寺
Fuyan Temple
南台寺
Nantai Monastery
忠烈祠
Martyrs Shrine
彌陀寺
Mituo Temple
白龍潭
Bailong (White Dragon) Pool
水簾洞
Shuilian Cave
南嶽大廟
Nanyue Temple
止觀橋
Zhiguan Bridge
南嶽鎮
Nanyue Town
祝聖寺
Zhusheng Temple
● Scenic spot
● Historic site

The tablet of the "City of King Yu", the largest carved stone on Mount Hengshan, looks particularly imposing against the azure sky.

A sudden snow has turned Zhu Rong Shrine on the summit of Zhu Rong Peak, the main peak of Mount Hengshan, into a world of glittering ice.

祝融峰
寅賓出日



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1. Mount Hengshan is also known as the "Mountain of Longevity". The pilgrims here naturally pray for a long life.
2. Every temple and monastery on Mount Hengshan is in traditional architectural style.
3. A Buddhist monk studying scriptures on Mount Hengshan
4. A commercial street on Zhu Rong Peak
5. Climbing Mount Hengshan in winter just like walking through a snow-clad forest in northern China.
6. Every Buddhist statue in the temples on Mount Hengshan has a very long history.
7. It is hard to believe that this photograph of a magnificent scene of ice and snow was taken on Mount Hengshan, the South Sacred Mountain.

According to legends, the Yellow Emperor, King Yao and King Shun had all come to the South Sacred Mountain to hunt or hold sacrificial ceremonies. King Shun had placed an agate jar, a tribute from the state of Danqiu, on top of Zigai Peak and distributed the sweet dew collected in the jar to tribal chieftains. There is still the site of Baolu (Precious Dew) Altar on the mountain. When Great Yu fought against the floods that ravaged the country, he fastened a horse to Yellow Emperor Peak as a sacrifice to heaven and earth on Mount Hengshan and prayed for help. He later came into possession of a heaven-sent golden book, which told him how to fight and harness the floodwaters.

When I flew to Changsha last November, I learned from the plane's broadcasting system that Hunan was assailed by a cold current, and the ground temperature in Changsha had dropped to 2 °C. As soon as the plane landed, I had to put on the feather coat I had brought with me for watching sunrise on Zhu Rong Peak.

The following morning, a tourist coach took me to the town of Nanyue. When I got there more than three hours later, wind and rain had brought the temperature further down. The peaks of the South Sacred Mountain were obscured by the misty rain. Since it was an ideal time to take photographs after the cold current, my companions and I decided to start climbing the mountain immediately. As the bus spiralled up the mountain, temperature dropped continually. After passing Half Way Pavilion, the rain gradually turned into snow. The wind blew harder, and the tree tops were covered in white. Presently, the road surface was coated with ice. As the bus could go no farther, we had to get down and walk. The mountain road was so slippery that it took us more than two hours to cover the 1,500 metres to the South Gate to Heaven.

At the South Gate to Heaven, we each put a pair of straw sandals over our shoes to make them less slippery. When we climbed to Lion Rock, it was blowing so hard that we could hardly stand still. Since it was getting dark, we decided to stay for the night on the mountain. The hotel there was empty except a cook and two attendants, who joined us for supper and spent a pleasant evening with us.

The God of Fire on Zhu Rong Peak

When the small alarm clock woke me up from my dream, it was still dark. I listened carefully and was pleased because the wind had stopped. Taking up my camera, I walked out of the hotel to Sunrise-Watching Terrace. It is a cement platform surrounded by stone balustrades, big enough for more than 1,000 people to stand on. With the Nanyue Meteorological Station behind it, the terrace is second only to Zhu Rong Peak in height. Although it was only about six o'clock in the morning, some staff members of the meteorological station and tourists who had been held up by the wind and snow the previous evening came to join us. As we greeted one another, we kept on rubbing our hands and stamping our feet to keep warm while waiting for the exciting moment.

A purple light gradually appeared in the eastern sky. Presently, a fiery ball began to rise from the horizon. Our faces were abruptly suffused with its warm and golden rays. Amidst loud cheers, I asked a staff member of the meteorological station out of curiosity, "Why you people are also here to watch the sunrise?" He said, "We haven' seen the sun for more than 20 days. The cold current cleared the sky last night. We've an average of 260 days of fog on the mountain You're lucky enough to see the snow and sunrise today."

When the sun rose higher, the majesty of the peaks of the mountain began to unfold before my eyes. The Xiangjiang River in the distance zigzagged its way round five bends flowing towards us. It was an exhilarating experience to watch this impressive natural scenery. When I turned my head, I found the 1,290-metre-high Zhu Rong Peak was just behind me.

Zhu Rong was the legendary God of Fire who taught people to use fire to cook food, keep themselves warm and drive away wild beasts. It is said that he was in charge of things in the south and had once resided on Mount Hengshan. Later, people named the highest peak of Mount Hengshan after him and built Zhu Rong Shrine on the summit of

(Continued on page 35)

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1. The cloud-enshrouded Mount Hengshan, which extends for 400 kilometres, i
the largest of the Five Sacred Mountains in area.
2. These stalls selling incense and candles beside the mountain path reveals tha
prayers come to Mount Hengshan even in cold winter days.
3. A spectacular scene of snow and ice at the summit of Mount Hengshan
4. An ideal site for a photo of snow-draped pines at the South Gate to Heaven o
Mount Hengshan

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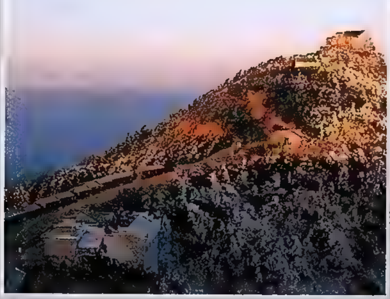

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1. *This archaic incense burner in Shangfeng Temple is a valuable cultural relic.*
2. *Winter snow gives additional interest to Mount Hengshan. A pair of straw sandals over the shoes prevents slipping.*
3. *The rosy morning clouds and mist give a mystic touch to the upturned eaves of the Shangfeng Temple.*
4. *The stately front gate of Shangfeng Temple*
5. *A copy of the "Da Zang Jing" (A Great Collection of Buddhist Scriptures) given by Emperor Taizu of the Ming Dynasty, is said to be stored in this Scripture Depository Temple on Mount Hengshan.*
6. *Two large characters, meaning "Mountain of Longevity", are carved on a huge boulder below the South Gate to Heaven.*

(Continued from page 30)

the mountain and offered sacrifices to him every year.

Zhu Rong Shrine is a granite structure built on a huge rock. When I knocked on the half-closed gate of the shrine, I was answered by the abbot, Monk Chu Ming. Following him into the shrine, I found a statue of Zhu Rong erected at the centre of the hall, consecrated with incense and lamps.

A rock outside the right side-door of the shrine is inscribed with these words: "Of all the scenic spots in the world, I am the highest." The rock marks the highest point of the South Sacred Mountain. Standing on it, I observed a strange phenomenon. After a gust of cold wind from the north, there was a gentle warm breeze from the south. I was surprised to find that there was a feeling of warm on one chick and a feeling of cold on the other.

From Zhu Rong Shrine, I began to descend along the stone steps and came to Shangfeng Temple. Before the Sui Dynasty (586-618), the spot was the 22nd Taoist altar for worshipping Heaven. When Emperor Yangdi of the Sui Dynasty was on his tour to the south, he ordered the construction of this temple, turning the Taoist altar into a Buddhist sanctuary. Bells still ring in the temple today, but few tourists know the history of the temple.

Not far from Shangfeng Temple is Guanyin Rock surrounded by a dense grove of pines. Three of the pines are taller than the others. It is said that in the Ming Dynasty (1386-1644), when two scholars and a monk visited the South Sacred Mountain, they planted three pine trees to show that their friendship was as evergreen as the pines. People of later days called the pines the First Scholar Pines. A flight of stone steps winding down to the south leads to the stone arch of the South Gate to Heaven. Not far to the east of the arch is a huge rock with two characters carved on it, meaning "Mountain of Longevity".

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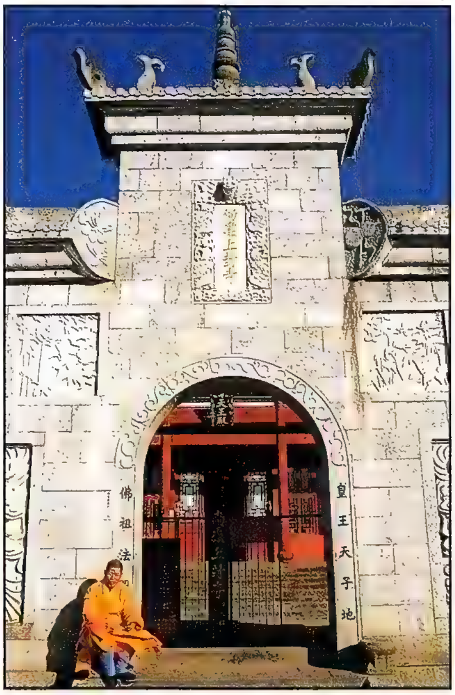

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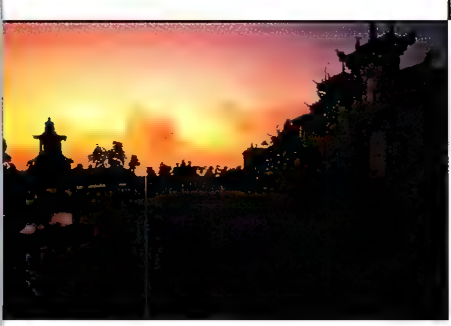
Cangjing (Scripture Depositary) Temple below Xiangguang (Auspicious Light) Peak is 3.5 kilometres from the South Gate to Heaven. The temple is overgrown with luxuriate shrubs and trees, many of which are more than 100 years old. Many distinguished monks in history had stayed here to practise Buddhism. At present four monks live in the temple — an abbot with his three disciples.

Another temple named Fuyan Temple, built on a slope and surrounded by red walls, was a famous centre of the Southern Chan Sect of Buddhism, a well-known establishment in the history of Chinese Buddhism. As it was early winter and there were few visitors, I saw bed sheets sunning in front of the main hall and a nun was knitting a woollen sweater. Behind the main hall is the sanctuary.

About 1,000 metres down the slope from Fuyan Temple is Nantai Monastery, which was famous for a monk once stayed there. Known as the Stone Monk, he was an important figure of the Qingyuan branch of the Southern Chan Sect. The screen wall just inside Nantai Monastery was inscribed with the Buddhist six-character incantation: "Om Ma Ni Ba Bi Hun". In the sanctuary I met Abbot Bao Tan, who told me that the Linji and Caodong sects of Buddhism found their way to Japan during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), and Nantai Monastery had become the temple of origin of the Japanese Caodong Chan Sect of Buddhism. Not long ago, a Japanese delegation had come to Nantai Monastery to pay homage.

Returning to Half Way Pavilion, I went to see the Taoist Xuandu Monastery of Ten Directions. The ten directions refer to east, west, south, north, front, rear, left, right, upper and lower, indicating that the monastery is ready to take in Taoists from everywhere. The statue of a red-bearded, three-eyed Guardian of the Law in armour and holding a whip stood in front of a screen wall just inside the monastery. Behind the wall was the Hall of Jade Emperor, where a statue of Jade Emperor, the omnipotent god executing the Doctrines of Heaven in the world of



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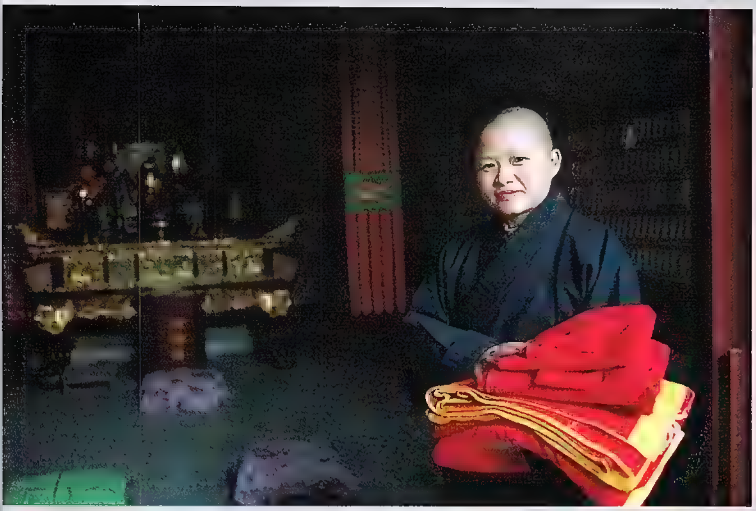

2

1. *One can often see inscribed stones along the path leading to the summit.*
2. *This nun with chiseled features is one of the residents in this nuneray on the mountain.*
3. *Nantai Monastery on Mount Hengshan has brought forth many distinguished monks since the Tang Dynasty.*
4. *Fuyan Temple was a famous centre of the southern sect of Chan Buddhism. As the southern sect developed into five branches from here, the temple was admiringly described as "One Flower, Five Leaves" and "The Flourishing of Five Leaves".*

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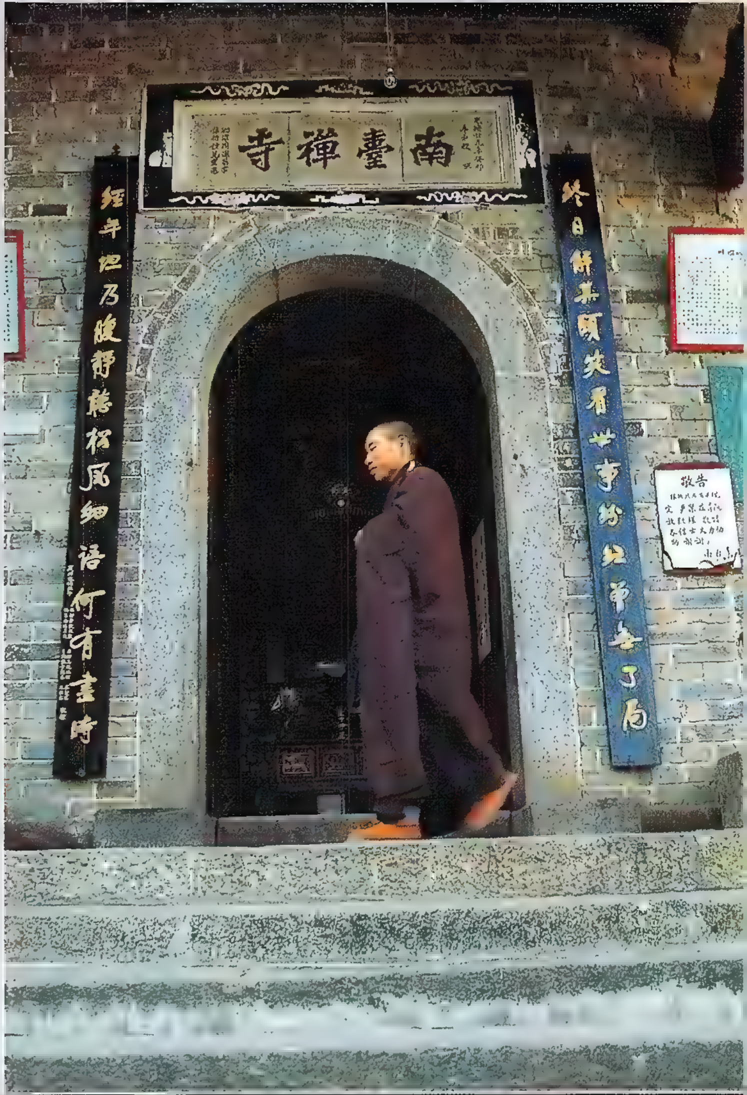

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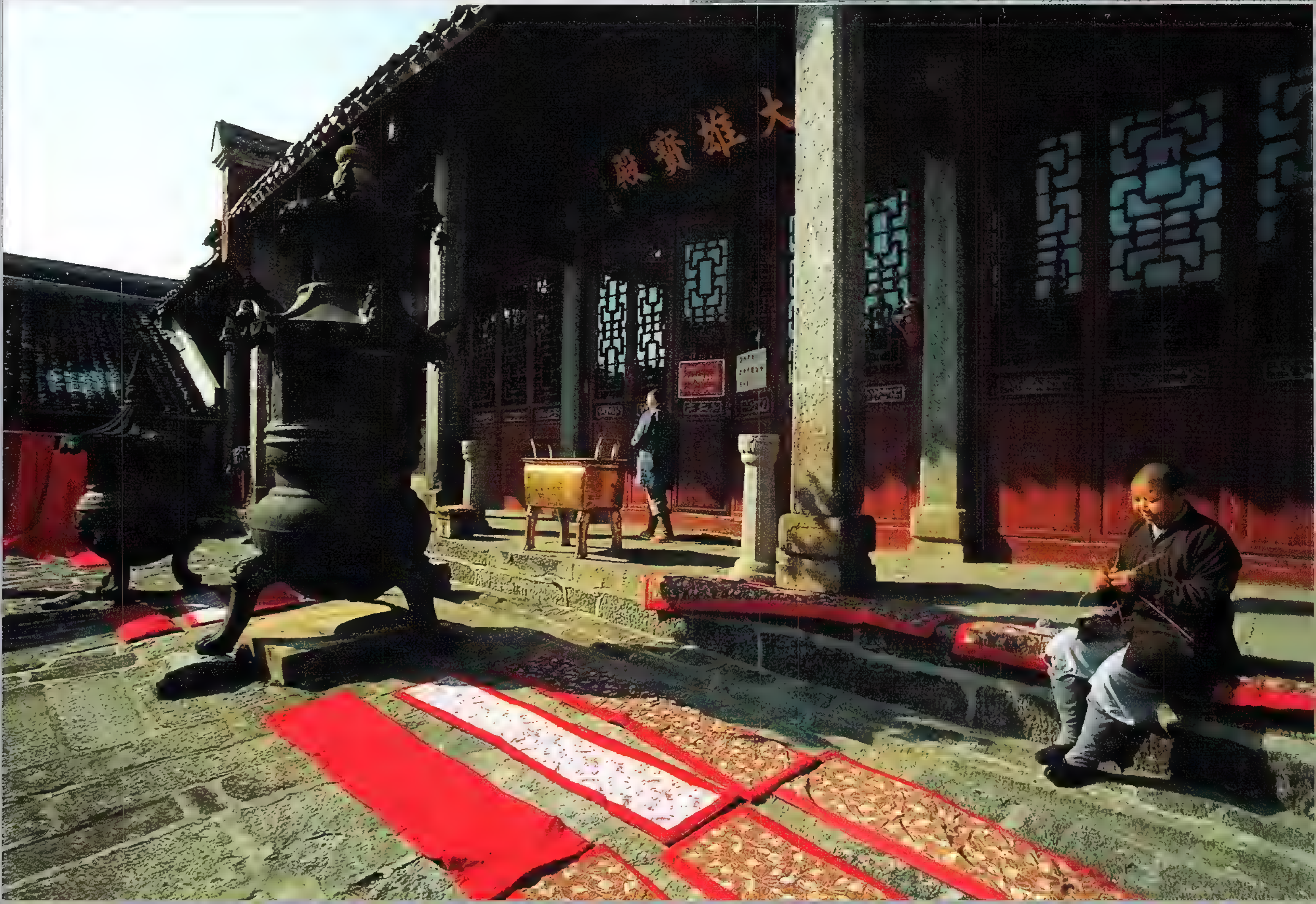

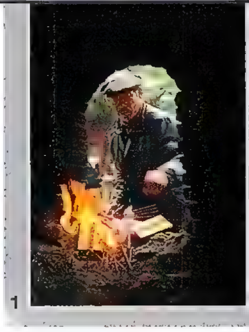

1

1. *A serious-looking and devout Buddhist believer*
2. *Pilgrims come to Mount Hengshan in a steady stream to burn incense and pray to the Buddha.*
3. *The great mountain archway leading to Mount Hengshan stands at Nanyue Town.*
4. *The Holy Emperor Hall is the main building of Nanyue Temple, the largest temple on the Five Sacred Mountains.*
5. *All the year round, Buddhist followers burn incense and kowtow to the statue of Holy Emperor in Nanyue Temple.*

immortals, was worshipped. Inside the Hall of Three Purities behind the Hall of Jade Emperor were the statues of the Taoist Trinity: Yuanshi, the God of Jade Purity; Lingbao, the God of High Purity; Daode, the God of Supreme Purity. More than a dozen Taoist priests and nuns are now in the monastery, which also houses the headquarters of the Hunan Taoist Association.

On my way down from Half Way Pavilion, I passed the Martyrs Shrine. Patterned after the Mausoleum of Dr. Sun Yat-sen in Nanjing, the shrine, built in 1942, is the largest mausoleum in the country for the memory of officers and men killed in the War of Resistance Against Japan.

Nanyue Temple — The Largest on the Five Sacred Mountains

Back to Nanyue Town, I visited Nanyue Temple. The temple covers an area of nearly 10 hectares, larger than any other temple on the Five Sacred Mountains. The front gate of it is called Lingxing Gate which indicates that a great number of talents will be brought forth for the country. All the buildings and structures in the temple lie on a south-north axis. There are altogether nine courtyards, one behind another. The layout is more or less like that of Beijing's Forbidden City. In the second courtyard is a theatrical stage known as Kuixing Pavilion. Since the ancient people looked upon Kuixing as the star of culture, it was later regarded as the head of civil officials. As theatrical performances were supervised by civil officials, the name implies the promotion of culture. The third courtyard together with its gate structure was destroyed by Japanese bombing in 1944 and has been converted into a scenery-viewing terrace. Behind the terrace is Imperial Tablet Pavilion, which was built during the reconstruction of the temple in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) to house a memorial stone tablet with the "Record of the Reconstruction of Nanyue Temple", written by Emperor Kangxi, carved on it. Jiaying Gate behind the pavilion was the spot where local officials and the abbot of the temple greeted officials from the capital to hold sacrificial ceremonies on the mountain. The gate is flanked on either side by winding corridors. Behind Jiaying Gate are the Imperial Library and Holy Emperor Hall. The latter is the largest building in the temple. The statues in the hall are five to six metres tall with genial yet dignified appearance. The North Gate at the ninth courtyard marks the end of the complex of buildings along the central axis.

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The next place I visited was Zhusheng Temple, which has a long history. In the temple I met Nun Ci Qiong, standing vice-president of the Nanyue Buddhist Association. When I asked her why the statue of Guan Yu instead of the usual Maitreya Buddha was worshipped in the Hall of the Heavenly King, her answer was that when Monk Zhi Yi of the Tiantai Sect intended to built a temple on Jade Empero Hill in Hubei, he met Guan Yu and his son Guan Ping. Both father and son were handsome and dignified in appearance They told the monk who they were and asked him to have the temple built near the mountain. Monk Zhi Yi agreed. Based on this story, people later began to worship Guan Yu as a guardian deity or the God of War.

Zhusheng Temple has brought forth many famous monks and is well known for its historic sites. Located in a picturesque and quiet place, Zhusheng Temple has long been a tourist attraction on Mount Hengshan.

I left Nanyue before dusk. when I arrived at Hengyang where I would change to a train, it was still early I made time to see Goose Returning Peak. The site has been converted into a city park. A sign at the entrance bears these words: "The First Peak of the South Sacred Mountain". The "peak" is actually a mound of rock and earth only several dozen metres high and washed in earthen red. It seems to be an exaggeration to call the mound the first of the 72 peaks of the South Sacred Mountain. This "peak", however, once acquired resounding fame. It is said that in ancient times when wild geese flew to the south in autumn, they stopped here, settled down on the sandbars in the rivers in this area and waited to fly back to the north in spring. Many poets and writers in history used "goose returning" as a metaphor in their sentimental and nostalgic poems or essays to describe their own experience in life. The fame of Goose Returning Peak, therefore, seems to have been created by poets.

Translated by Tang Bowen

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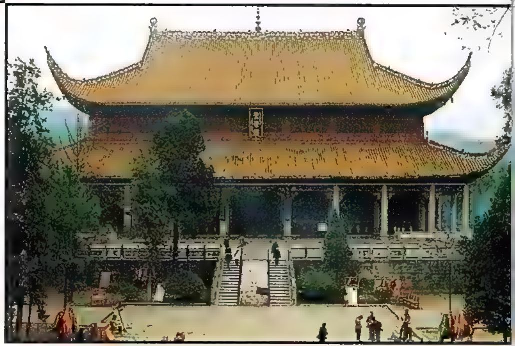

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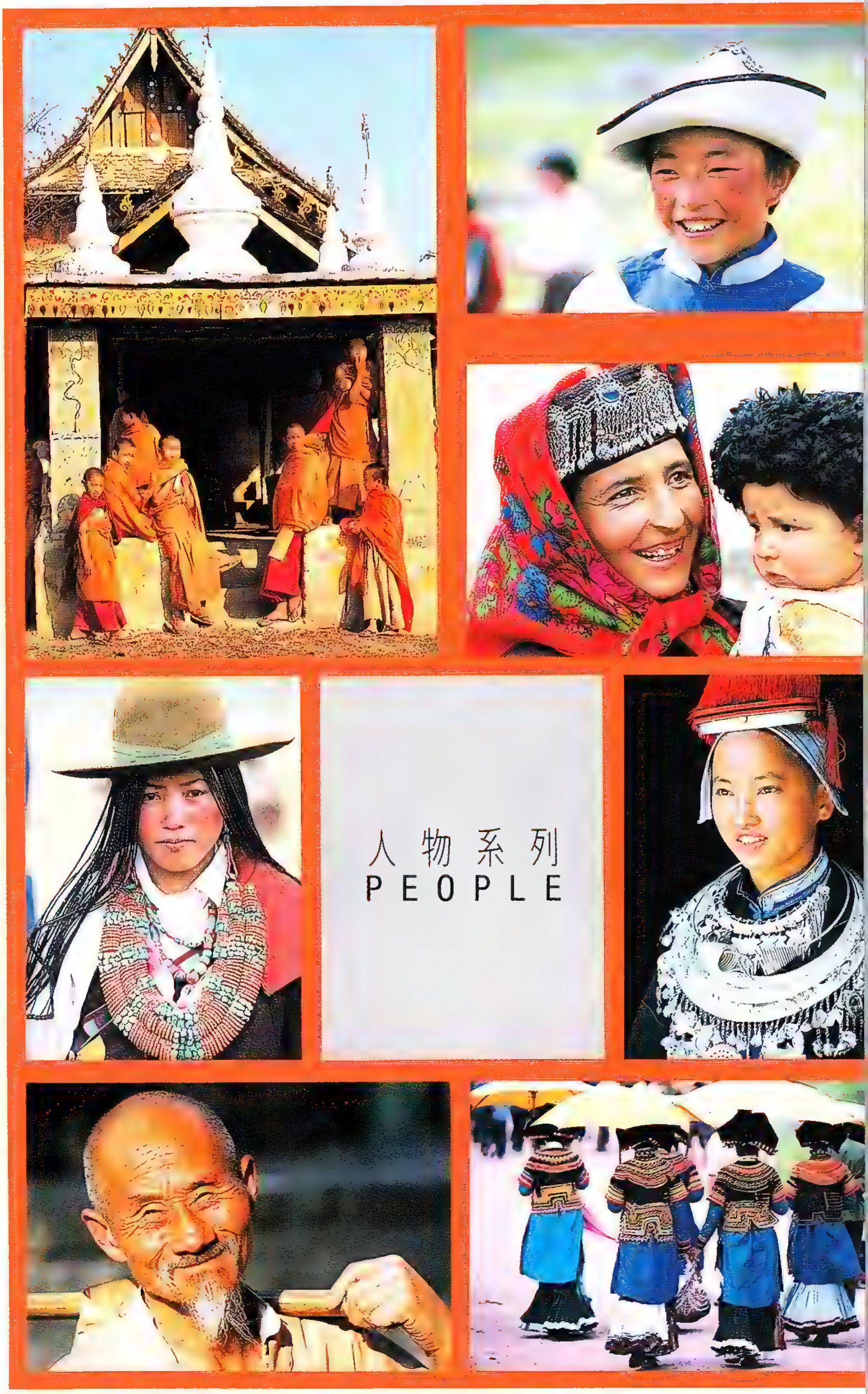

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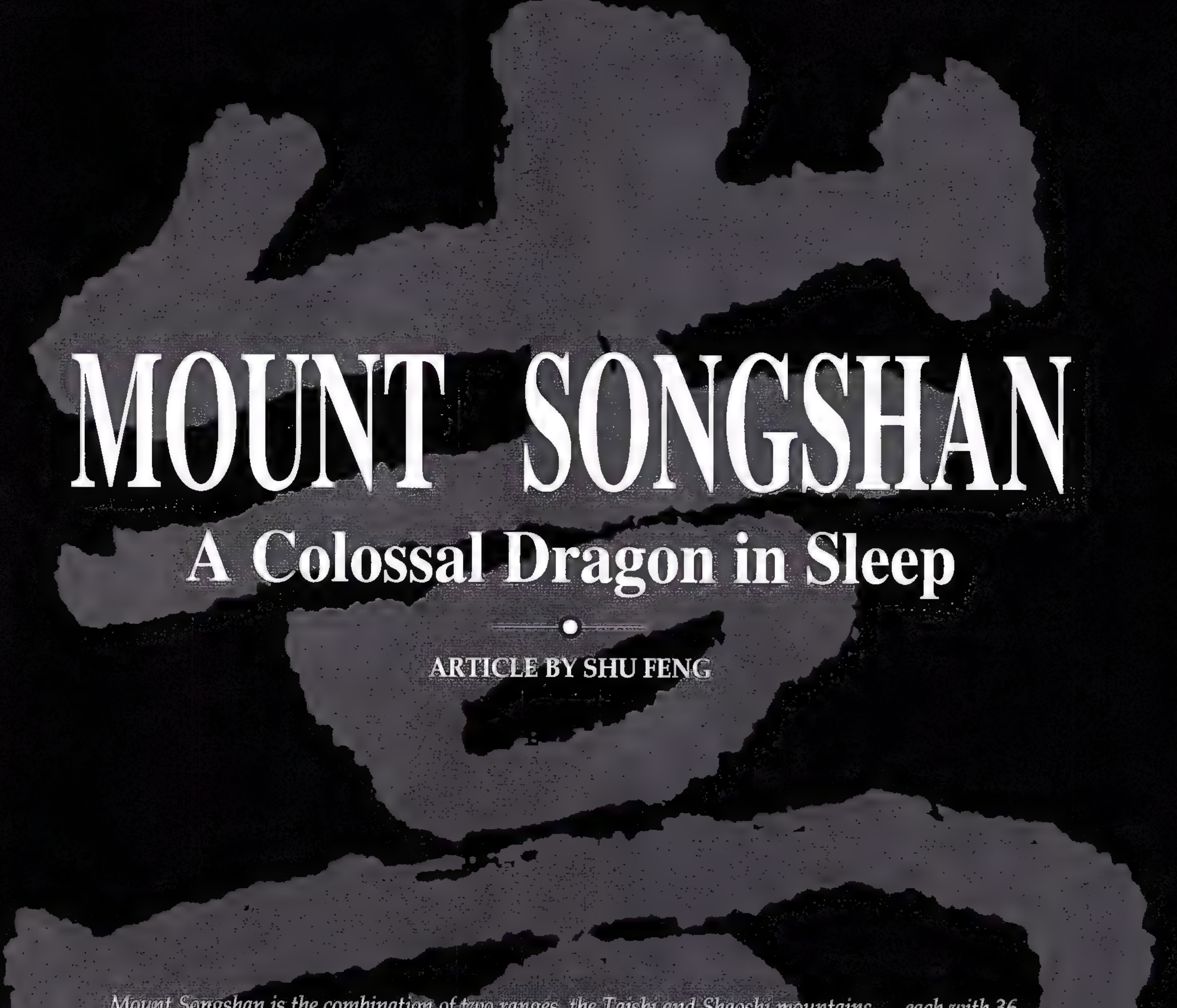


MOUNT SONGSHAN

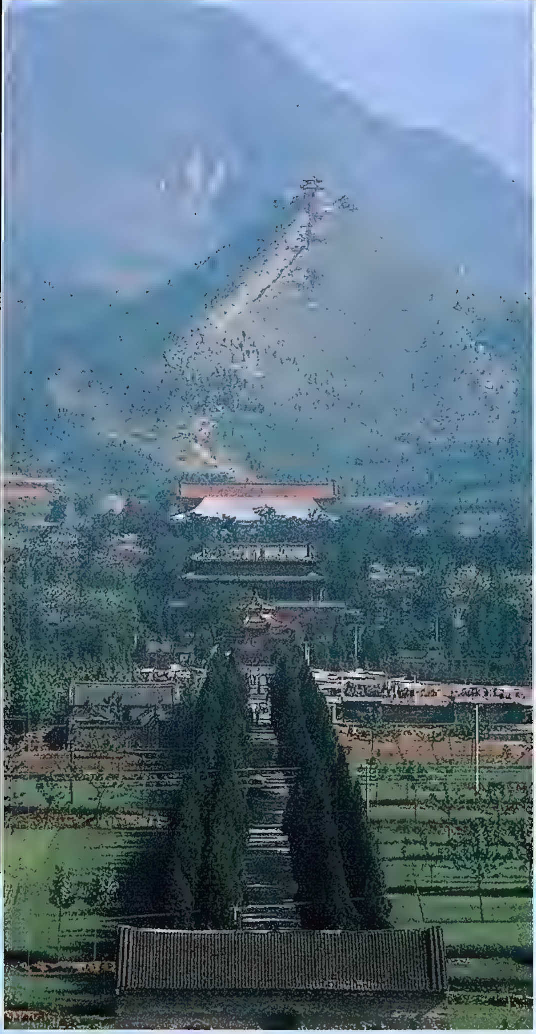
A Colossal Dragon in Sleep

ARTICLE BY SHU FENG

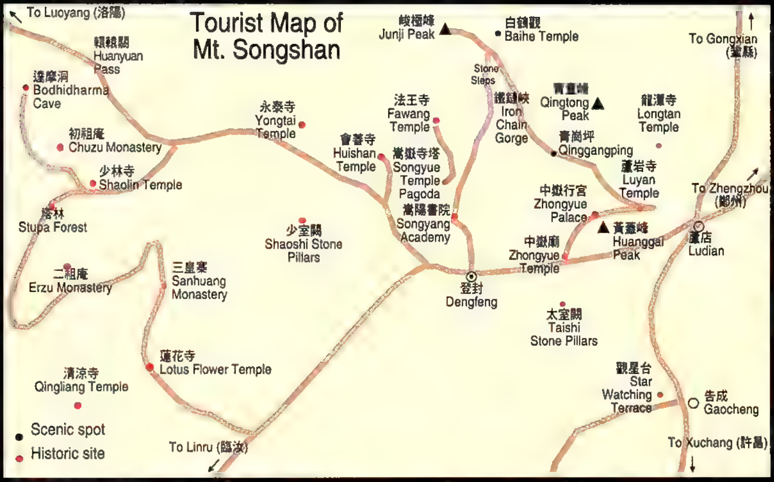
Mount Songshan is the combination of two ranges, the Taishi and Shaoshi mountains — each with 36 peaks. At a distance the billowing ridges of Mount Songshan look like a gigantic dragon in sleep; close at hand, it turns out to be a mass of furious topographical turmoil, with awesome peaks soaring up to unbelievable heights as if to prop up the vault of heaven.

For its strategic importance in the Yellow River basin in Central China, Mount Songshan used to be a bone of contention between warring strategists. In peaceful times, however, it was a tourist site for emperors of various dynastic periods. Yellow Emperor inspected Mount Songshan 4,500 years ago. King Yao, another hero in Chinese mythology, went on a hunting trip there on his 100th birthday. After King Yu, Yao's successor, tamed the Yellow River and took the throne, he established his capital in Yangcheng at the foot of Mount Songshan. It was at the highest peak of Mount Songshan that Empress Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the only woman monarch in Chinese history, held the most awesome of all state rituals in 696 to pray for her dynasty's fortune; a wealth of historical relics left on the mountain slope bear witness to the pomp and pageantry of that event.

Mount Songshan is a religious sanctuary shared in harmony between followers of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. It is where China's oldest Buddhist monastery (Fawang Temple) and Taoist centre (Zhongyue Temple) and most famous academy (Songyang Academy) are found. Judging from its layout and architecture, the holy Zhongyu Temple is roughly a scaled-down replica of Beijing's Palace Museum. The Shaolin Temple is the mecca for martial-art buffs the world over. Other famous spots of historical interest on the mountain include cypresses that date back to the Zhou Dynasty (c. 11th century-221 B.C.), Han-dynasty que pillars, a pagoda of the Wei Dynasty (386-557), stone tablets erected during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), calligraphic works and paintings by famous men of letters and artists through the ages, Duke of Zhou's Observation Terrace and a Yuan-dynasty observatory. The combination of a picture-perfect scenery and a cluster of landmarks rooted in an ancient civilization has earned Mount Songshan a worldwide repute as a leading tourist attraction in China.



With the Huanggai Peak hovering in the background the pavilions and halls of the Zhongyue Temple are tucked away amidst green pine trees and luxuriant cypresses (by Wang Yaojin).


Tourist Map of Mt. Songshan
To Luoyang (洛陽)
轘轅關
Huanyuan Pass
達摩洞
Bodhidharma Cave
初祖庵
Chuzu Monastery
少林寺
Shaolin Temple
塔林
Stupa Forest
二祖庵
Erzu Monastery
三皇寨
Sanhuang Monastery
蓮花寺
Lotus Flower Temple
清涼寺
Qingliang Temple
Scenic spot
Historic site
To Linru (臨汝)
永泰寺
Yongtai Temple
少室闕
Shaoshi Stone Pillars
會善寺
Huishan Temple
法王寺
Fawang Temple
嵩嶽寺塔
Songyue Temple Pagoda
嵩陽書院
Songyang Academy
峻極峰
Junji Peak
Stone Steps
白鶴觀
Baihe Temple
鐵鏈峽
Iron Chain Gorge
青童峰
Qingtong Peak
青崗坪
Qinggangping
龍潭寺
Longtan Temple
盧岩寺
Luyan Temple
中嶽行宮
Zhongyue Palace
黃蓋峰
Huanggai Peak
中嶽廟
Zhongyue Temple
登封
Dengfeng
太室闕
Taishi Stone Pillars
觀星台
Star Watching Terrace
告成
Gaocheng
盧店
Ludian
To Gongxian (鞏縣)
To Zhengzhou (鄭州)
To Xuchang (許昌)

Monks of Shaolin Temple on Mount Songshan are masters of Kungfu (by Wang Yaojin).

Martial arts collectively performed by a contingent of 800 Shaolin monks (by Wang Yaojin)

Disembarking from a 80-kilometre journey which brought me from Zhengzhou (capital of Henan Province) to Dengfeng County, I found myself right at the door of the Zhongyue Temple at the foot of Mount Songshan.

Zhongyue Temple — A Taoist Sanctuary

The Zhongyue Temple, or Temple of the Central Sacred Mountain, is one of the earliest Taoist establishments extant in China today. When it was first built during the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) for sacrificial rituals, it was called the Temple of Taishi. After long years of ups and downs, it was refurbished and expanded in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) in the style of Beijing's Forbidden City. Hence its nickname, Miniature Palace Museum.

With the Huanggai Peak towering behind it in the north, the temple is a group of structures symmetrically arranged in a quadrangle plan, with a flagged road running straight south as its axis.

On entering the Zhonghua Gate, which is a brick-and-tile archway with a gabled top, I embarked upon the flagged road which conducted me past the Yaocan Pavilion to the Zhongtian Pavilion. The front portal of the pavilion itself is a sight to behold. Great gates, held together with 126 oversized iron nails, weighing 1.5 kilogrammes each, with heads in the shape of tiger heads, turn heavily upon their hinges. Two three-metre-tall stone lions, looking ferocious with baring teeth and flying manes, stand sentinel at the portal.

After pacing through the Peitian zuozhen Archway, the Huasan Gate and the Junji (Supreme Height) Gate, I stopped by the Grand Hall, the centrepiece in the compound. Also named Junji Hall, it covers a floor-space of 920 square metres. Inside, in the centre of the floor, the statue of the God of the Central Sacred Mountain is enshrined in a giant baldachine which is richly carved and elaborately painted. The god, also known among Taoists as the King of Heaven, stands five metres tall and is dressed in gilt drapery. One has to throw his head back to see what the statue looks like. The god, however, is dwarfed in height by two warriors who stand by in attendance.

A crowd of pilgrims, most of them elderly women, stood in a semi-circle row around the shrine. A silver-haired granny emerged from the throng. She chanted incantations while planting a bundle of incense sticks in the burner and kowtowing to the god; then she launched herself into a ritual dance reminiscent of the *yangko* folk dance which is popular among Northerners.

Suddenly the notes of golden chimes and jade drums, rattled by a band of Taoist priests, burst upon the ear. To the rhythm delineated by the percussionists, the soft voices of the ladies rose in a chorus which sounds like a hybrid of Taoist and Buddhist music. When the singing drew to an end, every one kowtowed and take her leave.

The Grand Hall is the venue of two annual temple festivals, one held in the third lunar month and the other in the tenth. On both occasions the temple is packed to overflowing with tourists as well as pilgrims who come

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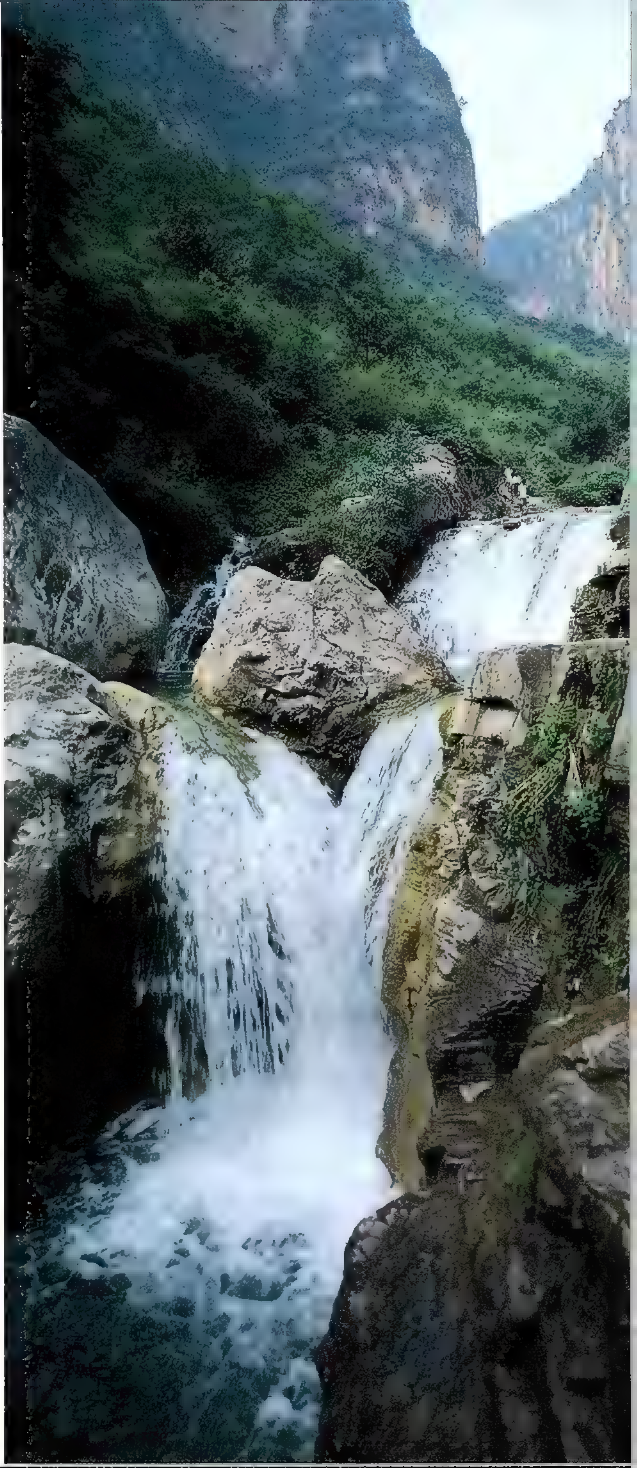

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1. The Black Dragon Pool on Taishi Mountain (by Wang Yaojin)
2. The Junji Gate of the Zhongyue Temple (by Peng Zhen Ge)
3. Mount Songshan, tainted crimson by late autumn leaves, looks even more bewitching (by Peng Zhen Ge).
4. Village women burning incense sticks in the temple and praying for the celestial saints' blessings (by Yu Deshui)
5. A stone tablet inscribed with Emperor Taizong's autograph in honour of the Shaolin Temple (by Peng Zhen Ge)
6. In the distance the imposing Mount Songshan looks like a giant dragon in sleep, with the Songyue Temple nestling at its foot like a glistening gem (by Wang Yaojin).

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to pay tribute to the celestial saints, attend theatrical performances, marvel at the lanterns or climb the mountains.

Behind the Grand Hall is the bedroom of the King of Heaven. A wooden sculpture of the god lay reclining in bed, with his consort sitting in state by his side. The presence of the two statues adds a human touch to the otherwise solemn atmosphere of the hall.

By the side of a footpath to the east of the Chongsheng Gate stands a holy deposit without any door or window, where in bygone days scrap religious instruments and statues were dumped. Four cast-iron figurines stand guard in each of the four corners. Composed of thirteen parts, each sculpture looks savage with glaring eyes, clenched fists, raised arms and puffed chest. I saw a similar room on the western side of the Chongsheng Gate, but the iron men were missing there.

Cave Hidden Behind a Cataract

I passed out at the back door of the Zhongyue Temple and hit upon a mountain path which winds its way up the summit of the Huanggai (Yellow Canopy) Peak. This is where the predecessor of the Zhongyue Temple was built in the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534). After the temple was rebuilt at the foot of the mountain, the old structure became a temporary dwelling for the emperor away from the capital. Today, however, only an octagonal pagoda is left there. The place provides a perfect bird's-eye view of the Zhongyue Temple below, where the green wood is studded and gemmed with crimson walls and glazed yellow roof tops.

A three-tiered cataract tumbles down the Qinggangping about three kilometres to the northeast of the Huanggai Peak. In the distance the cataract looks like a shining silver chain suspended in the blue sky. For this reason the mountain is called "Peak of Hanging Chain".

Turning northwest at Qinggangping and proceeding a little further, I stopped by the edge of a chasm which cuts the mountain into a narrow and unfathomable obyss known as the "Iron Chain Gorge". A mountain footpath hangs precarious on the rocky face above the gorge; despite the

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"Generals" of the Songyang Academy

Three cypresses used to be growing in the courtyard of the Songyang Academy, but today only two are still alive. Once upon a time, Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty visited the academy during a religious tour of Mount Songshan. Upon entering the front gate he was greeted by a cypress; impressed by its towering and thick trunk, he conferred the title "Great General" on it. When he entered an inner door he saw a much taller cypress. Since it was taboo for an emperor to change his words, he had no alternative but to decorate it as "Second General". When he went through another inner door, he was astonished to see a third cypress, which stood more imposing than the other two, and he made it "Third General"

Today, the Great General and the Second General — believed to be survivors of a now-defunct ancient forest — are still growing robustly, their thick foliages forming giant overhead canopies.

4

1. The Panwang Temple, built at the Junji Peak with money donated by Taoist followers
2. Sanhuang Monastery at the foot of the Taishi Mountain
3. The "Goat's Nose" up the Taishi Mountain provides an overall view of the rocky jumble of Mount Songshan.
4. "General" pine at the Songyue Academy
5. A new pavilion has been built atop the Junji Peak of the Shaoshi Mountain. (All by Peng Zhen Ge)

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assuring aid of an iron-chain railing, one could scarcely inch his way forward without shuddering.

Empress Wu Zetian's Altar Atop Junji Peak

Looking down from the summit of the 1,440-metre-high Junji Peak, I got a perfect view of the jumble of 72 rocky eminences which combine to be known as Mount Songshan.

At the mountain top there is Tianchi Pond which never dry up and where angels took their baths. Inside the Temple of the Pangu and the Temple of Nüwa (a legendary goddess who patched up the leaking sky), monks serve dumplings and tea to pilgrims, who donate money in return. The Junji Peak is where Empress Wu Zetian, the only woman monarch in Chinese history, built an altar and performed her empire's most awesome sacrificial ceremony. Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty made his visit to the peak known by inscribing two stone tablets planted there with his own handwriting.

The empress was carried to the top of the Junji Peak by the shortest but very steep route on the western slope. Now, paved with stone steps, it has become the main road for pilgrims and visitors alike. Climbing down the mountain along the road, I encountered a string of scenic spots.

The Fawang Temple on the top of the Yuzhu Peak was built in the Eastern Han Dynasty more than 1,900 years ago it is among the oldest monasteries in China. The temple is engulfed among towering peaks. The space between the two peaks to the east of the temple takes the shape of a gigantic door; hence the name "Gate of Mount Songshan". From the Moon Watching Terrace, the moon can be seen ascending slowly through the "gate" on the night of Mid-Autumn Festival.

The 41-metre-tall Songyue Pagoda with a history of over 1,400 years at the temple is the oldest brick pagoda extant in China. The windows, pillars, eaves and other parts of this 15-floor structure are made entirely of bricks glued together with yellow mud.

On my way from the Songyue Temple back to the county town I stopped to see the cultural relics housed in the Songyang Academy. Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty conferred the title "General" on three tall cypresses in the academy; today only two remains as the oldest cypress trees in existence in China.

Footprints in the Thousand Buddha Hall

In ancient times Dengfeng was called Songyang. The present name was given by Empress Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty when she climbed up the Junji Peak for the grandest of al her empire's sacrificial ceremonies.

At the northern foot of the Shaoshi Mountain 12 kilometres to the west of the county town stands the world-famous Shaolin Temple, with the Wuru Peak lurking in the background and a gurgling stream running pas its portal. A gilded horizonta board, inscribed with the temple's name in the handwriting o Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1722 of the Qing Dynasty, is hung above the door.

The Shaolin Temple was founded in 495, during the Wei Dynasty by a sramana monk from India Thirty years later, the temple flourished under the leadership of Bodhidharma, a monk from south India, who was the firs patriarch of the Chan Sect o Chinese Buddhism. In the years that followed the Shaolin Tem

ple saw many ups and downs. In its heyday during the Tang Dynasty, it grew into a 670-hectare affair, with more than 5,000 pavilions, terraces and halls within its compound, thus earning the name "No. 1 Temple Under Heaven". In 1928, however, the troops of the warlord Shi Yousan set the temple on fire; in the raging flame that lasted 45 days and nights the temple was reduced to ashes. Only the Thousand Buddha Hall, the Hall of White Robe, Bodhidharma Pavilion, the Forest of Stone Tablets and the Stupa Forest survived.

A 300-square-metre fresco, entitled "Five Hundred Arhats Paying Tribute to Vairocana", covers the eastern, western and northern walls of the Thousand Buddha Hall. All the arhats wear life-like facial expressions and each is depicted in a unique posture. One theory ascribes this fresco to Wu Daozi, a master artist of the Tang Dynasty.

Four rows of depressions are seen in the brick-paved floor of the hall. They are a result of the impact of tramping and in numerous sessions of martial arts exercises. These depressions explain why monks of the Shaolin Temple can achieve such consummate skills as to win them worldwide prestige.

I saw three other colourful murals in the Hall of White Robe, which is situated to the southeast of the Thousand Buddha Hall. The one on the back wall draws its theme from two tales, "Thirteen Baton-wielding Monks Save the Life of Prince of Tang" and "Wang Renze, a General of the Bogus King of Zheng, Captured Alive".

Visitors to the Shaolin Temple can not only see military monks in pictures but also see them in action. Every Shaolin monk, old and young, can jump high and far as if on spring. When they flail their fists about there is a breath-taking silence in the air; and they wield weapons with such deft rapidity that both limbs and weapons become a blur in a swirl of wind. The other Shaolin stunts include splitting a brick with a single palm and ramming one's head into a hard stone. When a monk places a bowl on his belly and invited the visitors to take it away, no one can overcome the belly's

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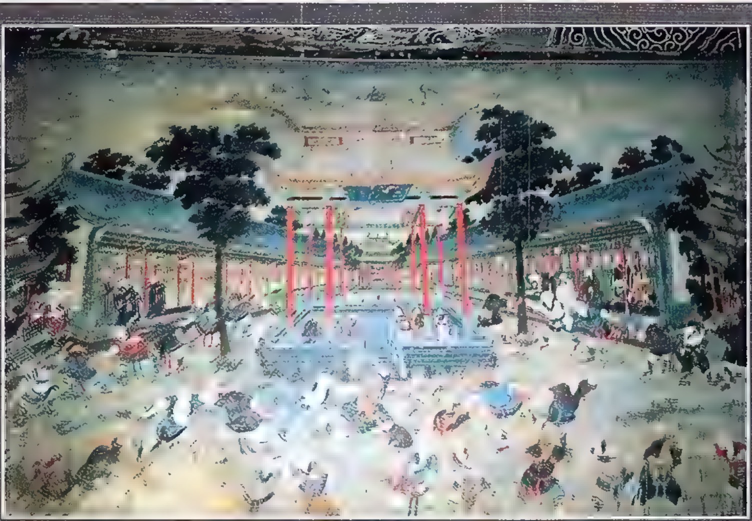
Prince of Tang and His Monk Saviours



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A fresco in the Shaolin Temple's Hall of White Robe tells the story of 13 baton-wielding monks rescuing Li Shimin, then the Prince of Tang, from his enemy.

In 620, Li Shimin was commanding an expedition from Tongguan to Luoyang against Wang Shichong, who had just installed himself as the King of Zheng without authorization. However, Li was captured and thrown into prison. Thirteen Shaolin monks slipped into the city at night and spirited him out. They then gathered 500 monks behind them and captured alive Wang Renze, the bogus king's cousin and right-hand man, thus forcing Wang Shichong to surrender. When Li Shimin was enthroned as Emperor Taizong in 626, he immediately conferred an honorary imperial title on the Shaolin Temple. A stone-tablet was erected in the temple as evidence of it.

1. A newly-erected sculpture of Shaolin monk by the highway near the Huanyuan Pass (by Peng Zhen Ge)
2. A well-trained Shaolin monk is showing his excellent martial arts (by Wang Yaojin).
3. Monk Yan Long, the youngest monk of the Shaolin Temple (by Wang Yaojin)
4. A fresco inside the Hall of White Robe depicts a group of drilling Shaolin monks (by Yu Deshuai).
5. An impressive archway of the Shaolin Temple (by Wang Yaojin)

5

sucking power and pull the bow down. None of these stunts, however, is more thrilling than what i called "hanging oneself on rope". To the oohing and aahin of the spectators, a young mon strikes a series of kungfu posture — all the while a noose is tigh around his neck and his entir body is dangling in the air.

Martial Arts Schools Flourishing

Close by the Shalin templ spreads a forest of 220 stupas. Underneath each stupa are buried th remains of a high monk whos name can be found in the temple' history book. Tucked away amids green bamboo and luxuriant pin trees, the stupas are of varyin heights and styles and engrave with diverse patterns. Despite th mournful nature of the site, man come in search of a piece of history, or simply for the fun of it.

As an important tourist attraction, the Shaolin Temple receives constant stream of tourists. On busy day the number of visitor can reach as high as 60,000. Man of them come to learn martial art To meet their needs, 20 or s schools have been set up by th highway at the foot of the Shaosl Mountain, with monks from th Shaolin Temple serving a coaches. At present 6,000 peopl are studying in these school quite a few of them from oversea If a trainee has shown his knac for martial arts and happens to b a Buddhist, he can, upon hi coach's recommendation, b tonsured and initiated in the temple as a formal disciple.

Unlike their counterparts elsewhere who live on alms, monks o the Shaolin Temple are wage earners. If they like they can qu the temple and return to the la world.

Quartz Boulders Atop Shaoshi Mountain

I rode to the Lianhua (Lotu Flower) Temple from the Shaoli Temple to climb the Shaosh Mountain. The name Shaoshi which means "Her Young Ladyship's Mountain Habitat", is derived from the legend that th mountain is where King Yu ha built a residence for his secon wife. Five razor-sharp peaks protrude upward from atop th Shaoshi Mountain like the petal of a lotus flower. Hence the name "Lotus Flower Mountain".

The stairway that conducts to the summit of the Shaoshi Mountain is hewn into the rock face. The terrain here is unusually steep. The ridges shoot their perpendicular spires into the blue sky, while down below, the mountain slope plunges into an unfathomable abyss.

Contrary to the thriving scene around the Shaolin Temple, a peculiar melancholy reigns over the Shaoshi Mountain. The slope abounds in rocks of nondescript images and shapes. Huge quartz blocks stand several hundred metres tall and lean slanting against one another like a stack of playing cards. Earth's repeated orogenic movements, which took place 2.5 billion to 600 million years ago, have left distinctive marks on Mount Songshan. The Shaoshi Mountain, where the impact of crustal movements is even more pronounced, is known as "Museum of Geology."

In the past it took more than one hour to scale the Shaoshi Mountain along the mountain path which first made detour down the bottom of the ravine before spiralling up the opposite cliff. A plank bridge has recently been built astride the ravine to help save the climbers' time and energy.

Barracks on the Top of the Mountain

The other end of the plank bridge opens to the eastern mouth of the narrow, deep Gully of the Jade Emperor. Standing at the entrance I suddenly felt a strong wind which threatened to suck me into the oblivion of the gully. I jumped away by instinct. I was told that the place, nicknamed "Mouth of Induced Draft", does possess a suction power so strong as to be life-threatening.

Reaching the western end of the gully along a narrow footpath, I saw the scenery obscured by puffs of white fog which kept rolling up from the bottom of the gully. I instantly knew I had reached the well-known "Mist Projecting Mouth" of the Shaoshi Mountain.

No less well-known than the "Mist Projecting Mouth" is the

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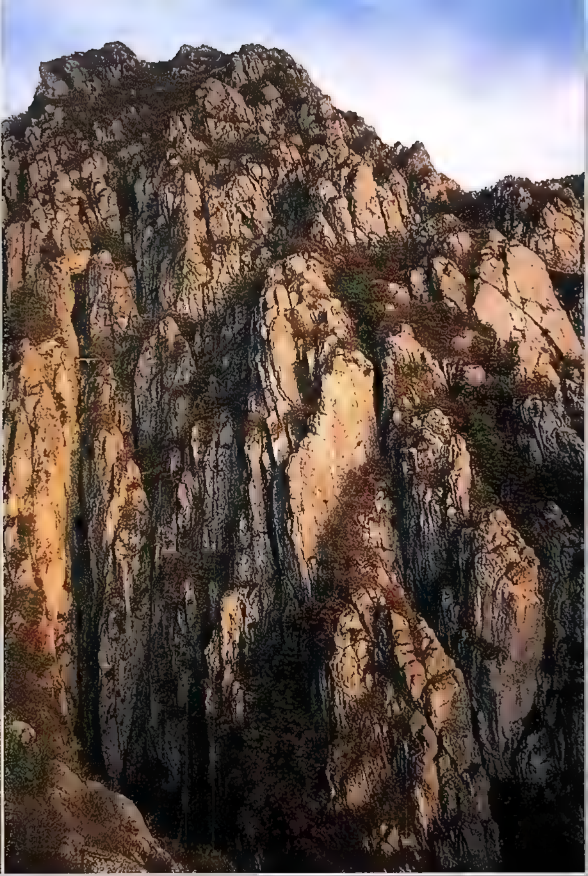
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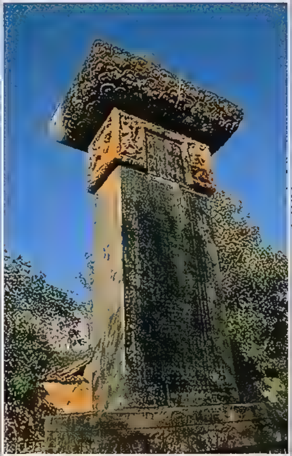
A Tang-Dynasty Stone Tablet

Stone tablets are sctered on Mount Songshans, many of them dating back to the Song Dynasty. The most famous one erected in 744 in front of the Songyang Academy is the Largest stone tablet on Mount Songshan at a height of 10 metres. Its top and bottom and along all its edges are in exquisite craftsmanship. An epitaph is inscribed on it to eulogize Sun Taichong, a Taoist priest, who practised alchemy in search of the Pill of Immortality for Emperor Minghuang. The text was written in an elegant hand by Xu Hao, a famous calligrapher of the time.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1. The Scene of delicate beauty on Shaoshi Mountain attracts a number of climbers.
2. The path on the Shaoshi Mountain is steep and narrow.
3. A thrilling glimpse at the Shaoshi Mountain
4. A stone tablet erected during the Tang Dynasty
5. A cableway was recently built near the Stupa Forest of the Shaolin Temple.
(All by Peng Zhen Ge)

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"Resounding Ditch". About a dozen metres wide but immeasurably deep, the ditch is filled with impenetrable fog. I tossed a small stone at the opposite cliff. This elicited an echo as loud as a mountain gale in full blast.

Further down the slope I saw the "Strip of Sky", where two vertical precipices stand so close that the sky between them is reduced to a mere seam. The cliff on the eastern side looks steep and slippery, so that the local people call it "A Headache for Monkeys". A thick iron chain is fixed on the surface of the western cliff to provide good sport for mountaineers, but even the bravest climber can be scared away by the yawning abyss that lies right beside it.

The road is flanked by rocks of exotic shapes as I laboured my way past the "Mouth of the Tiger" and the "Prop of the Sky" and through the South Gate to Heaven until I stopped at the Village of Three Emperors. The "village" consists of a solitary old Taoist temple, which has been home to three old nuns over the last few decades. They never talk to the casual visitors, as if hushed silence were their answer to the desertion and obscurity of the place.

I was surprised to see that the top of the 1,500-metre-high mountain was actually a piece of flatland. Only a few huge boulders stand at its edges. In the shadow of green pine trees and cypresses lie a cluster of three ponds, which are called "Greater Drinking Horse Pond", "Lesser Drinking Horse Pond" and "Small Pond". In 1218, Emperor Xuanzong and his troops were moving the capital of the Jin Dynasty from Beijing to Kaifeng. With the Mongols hot at his heels, he was forced to seek refuge in Mount Songshan. Several dozen thousand of his troops were barracked for several months on the summit of the Shaoshi Mountain. That is why the mountain is also called "Mountain of Barracks". Today, all the structures there have been reduced to ruins, which stand witness to that episode of Chinese history.

Translated by Ling Yuan

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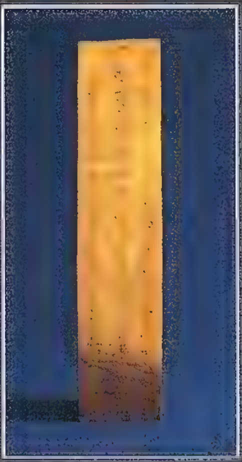

Empress Wu Zetian's Gold Placard

In 696, Empress Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty scaled Mount Songshan, where she consecrated the Taishi and Shaoshi mountains and renamed two local counties (Dengfeng for Songyang County, and Gaocheng for Yangcheng County). She then made the God of the Sacred Mount Songshan "Emperor of Central Heaven" and his consort "Empress of Central Heaven". Thereafter she made a few more visits to Mount Songshan. In 700, she had a gold placard made and tossed into the mountain to appease the celestial saints and beg for their blessings. The placard, 247 grammes in weight and 36.3 cm in length, is inscribed with 63 Chinese characters.

1. A footpath winds its way up the perpendicular quartz cliff of Mount Songshan like a belt (by Peng Zhen Ge).
2. The statues of Sakyamuni, Lao Zi and Confucius sit shoulder to shoulder inside a shrine housed in the Anyang Hall at the northern side of the Shaoshi Mountain (by Yu Deshui).
3. Wu Zetian's Gold placard (by Yan Xinfa).
4. A plank bridge sits astride a deep gully in the Shaoshi Mountain (by Peng Zhen Ge).
5. Sanhuang Monastery atop the Shaoshi Mountain (by Peng Zhen Ge).

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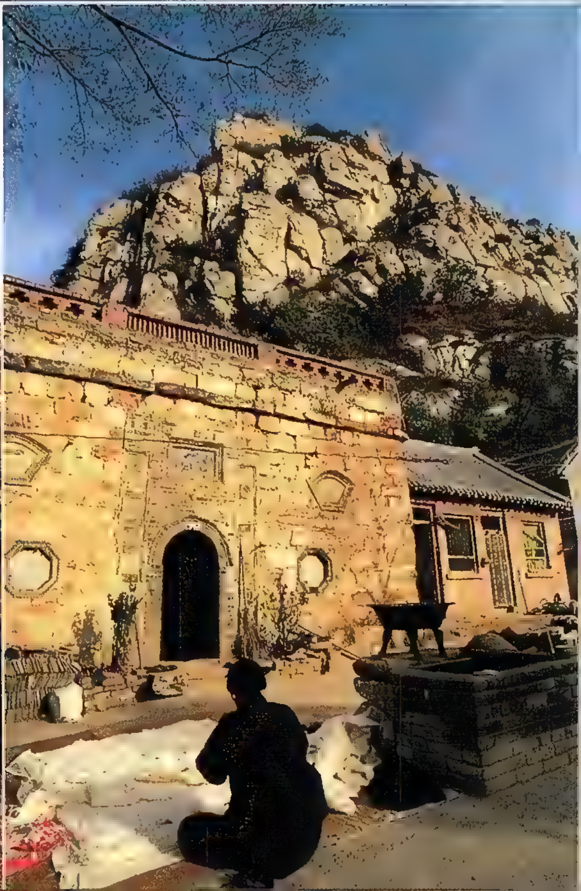

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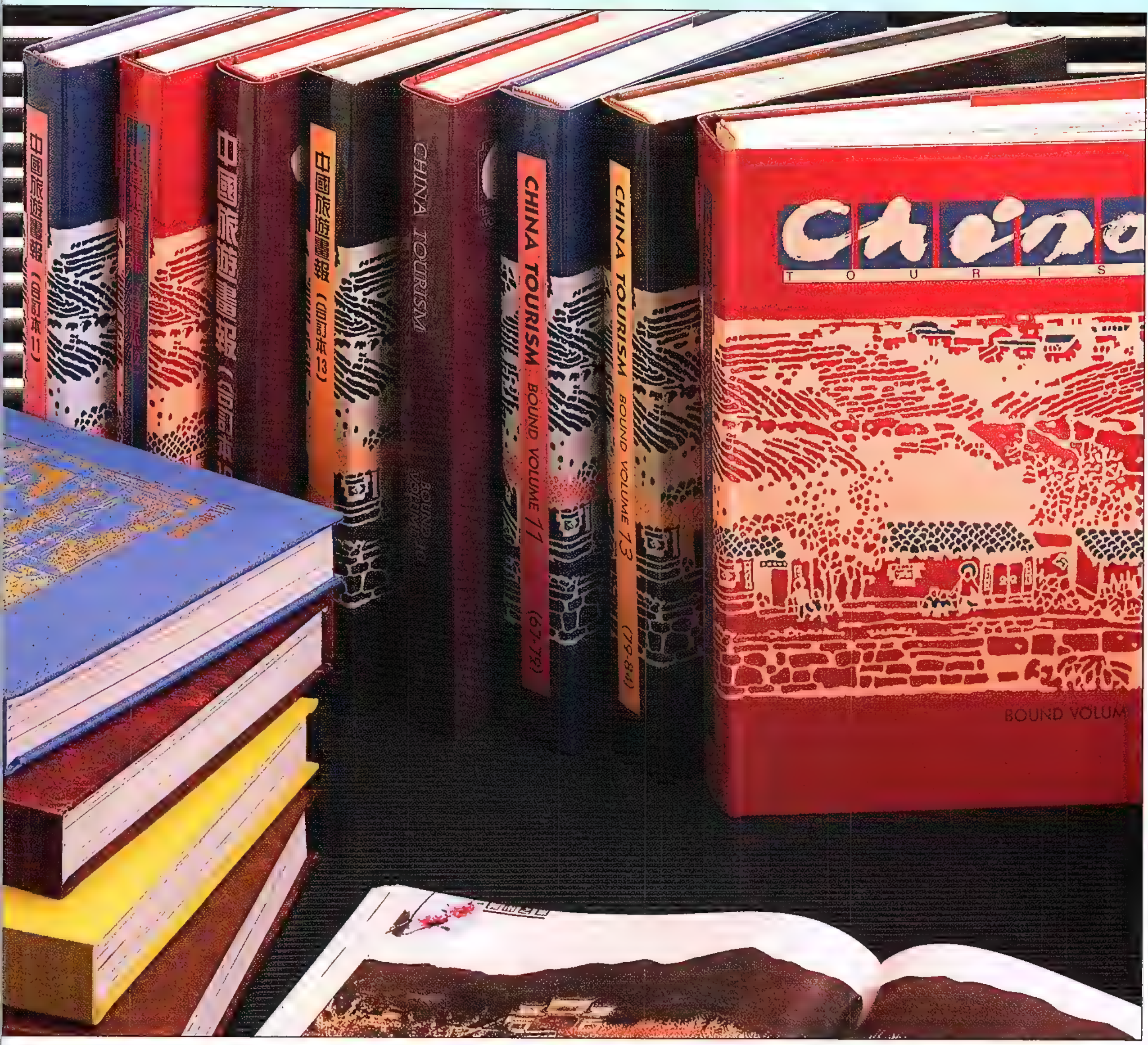
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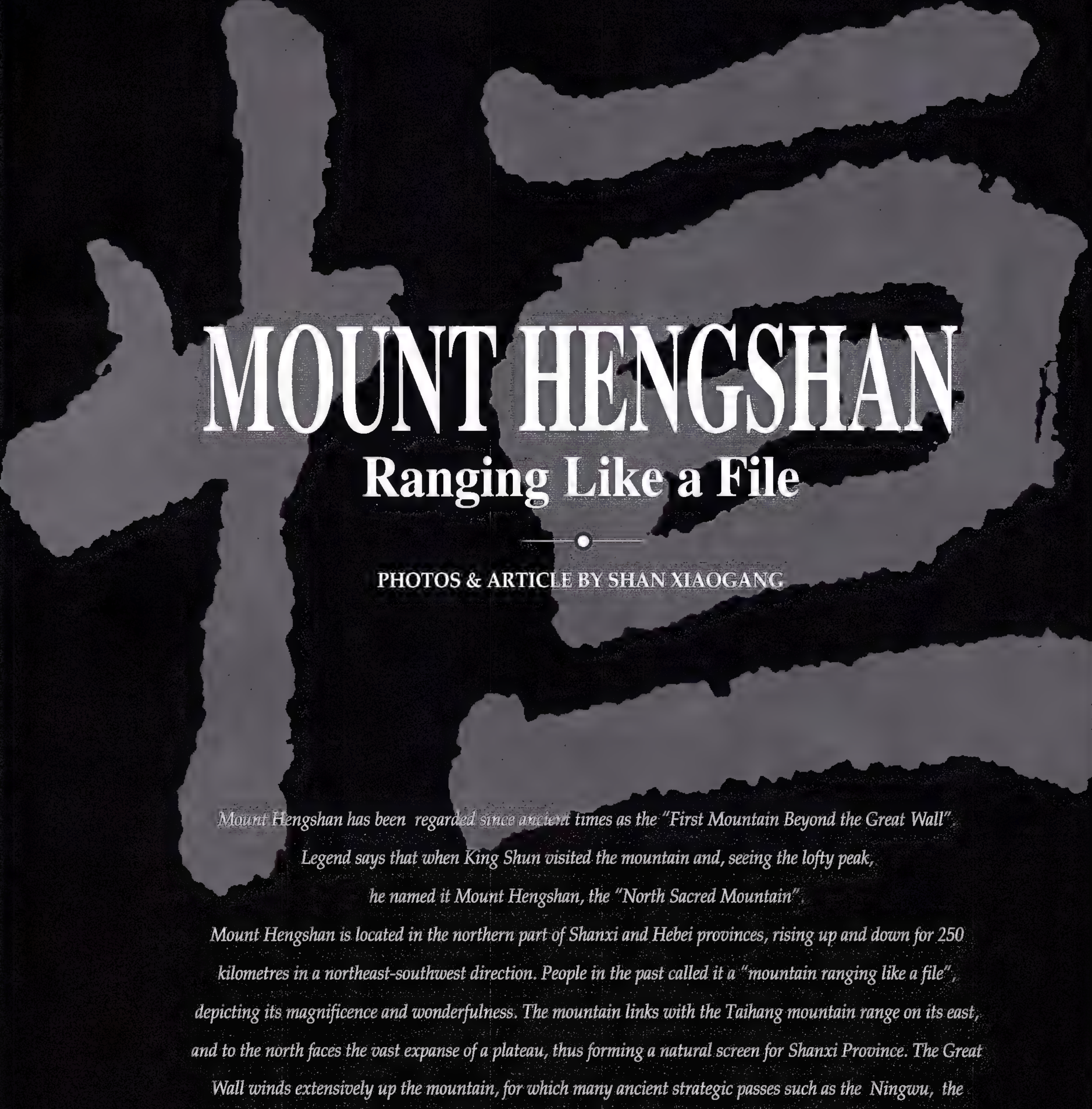


MOUNT HENGSHAN

Ranging Like a File

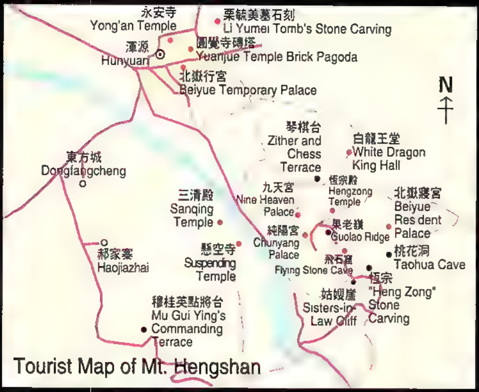
PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY SHAN XIAOGANG

Mount Hengshan has been regarded since ancient times as the "First Mountain Beyond the Great Wall". Legend says that when King Shun visited the mountain and, seeing the lofty peak, he named it Mount Hengshan, the "North Sacred Mountain".

Mount Hengshan is located in the northern part of Shanxi and Hebei provinces, rising up and down for 250 kilometres in a northeast-southwest direction. People in the past called it a "mountain ranging like a file", depicting its magnificence and wonderfulness. The mountain links with the Taihang mountain range on its east, and to the north faces the vast expanse of a plateau, thus forming a natural screen for Shanxi Province. The Great Wall winds extensively up the mountain, for which many ancient strategic passes such as the Ningwu, the Yanmen, the Pingxing, the Zijing and the Daoma where ancient strategists often contested. The well-known Yang Family generals from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) had once garrisoned three passes and built fortresses on Mount Hengshan. The ruins of these fortresses can still be found there.

Mount Hengshan's main peak, Tianfeng (Heavenly Peak) Ridge, rises 2,017 metres above sea level. Its steep northern slope is covered with pine trees, and on its southern slope, temples and monasteries built by ancient kings and emperors to worship their ancestors are located. Mount Hengshan was once famous for its "Eighteen Sites of Interest", and there still remain a dozen sites such as Xuankong (Suspending) Temple, Zhaodian Hall, Flying Stone Cave, Huixian (Celestial-Meeting) Mansion and Jiutian (Nine Heaven) Palace.

Viewing Mount Hengshan from the county town of Hunyuan, the mountain shrouded in mist at sunset looks like a fairyland.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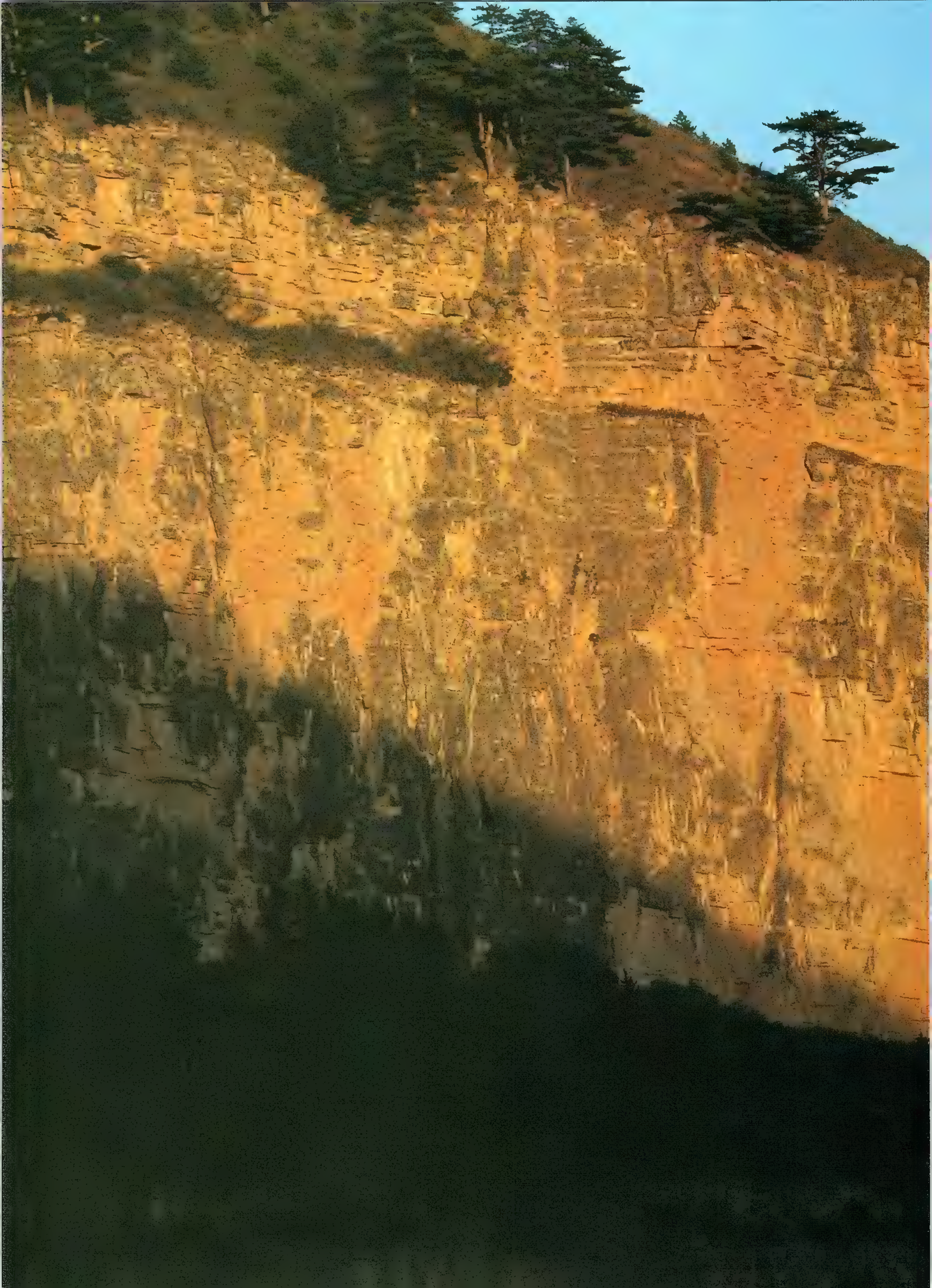
白龍王堂
White Dragon King Hall
東方城
Dongfangcheng
恆宗殿
Hengzong Temple
九天宮
Nine Heaven Palace
三清殿
Sanqing Temple
北嶽寢宮
Beiyue Resident Palace
純陽宮
Chunyang Palace
果老嶺
Guolao Ridge
郝家寨
Haojiazhai
懸空寺
Suspending Temple
飛石窟
Flying Stone Cave
桃花洞
Taohua Cave
恆宗
"Heng Zong" Stone Carving
姑嫂崖
Sisters-in-Law Cliff
穆桂英點將台
Mu Gui Ying's Commanding Terrace

Tourist Map of Mt. Hengshan

An old Taoist nun sits in meditation at Zither and Chess Terrace on the summit of Mount Hengshan, the place where celestials met and played chess according to legend.



Xiyang (Setting Sun) Terrace where the mountatin looks spectacular

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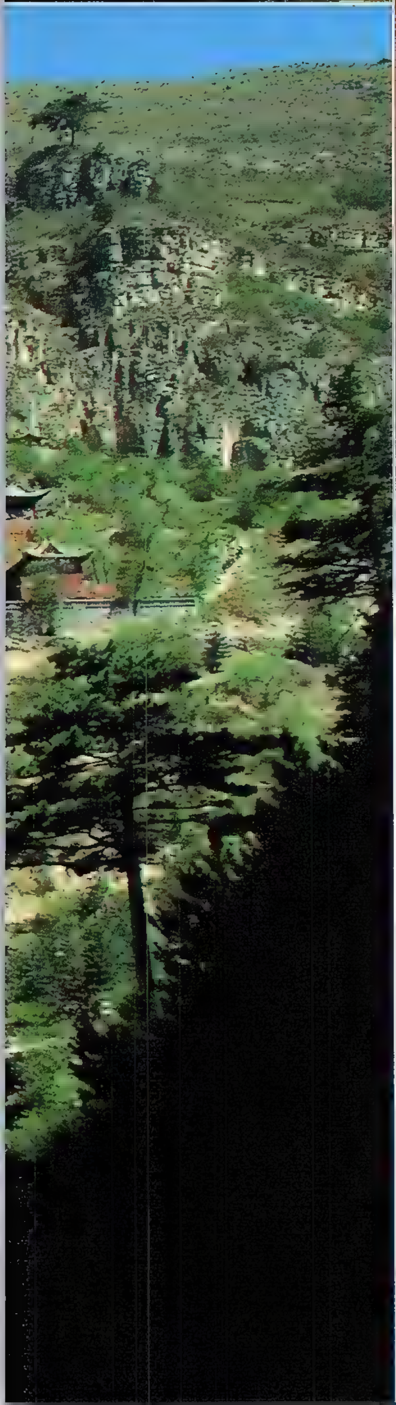

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1. Red cloth donated by pilgrims is hanging in the room of the Taoist monks, a decoration with mysterious atmosphere.
2. In early morning, this pilgrim from far away has already arrived at the temple to pay worship.
3. Beiyue Resident Palace hidden in Flying Stone Cave on Flying Stone Peak
4. Temples and monasteries dot the southern slope of the main peak Heavenly Peak Ridge.

5

5. The two characters "Heng Zong" on Big Character Ridge on Mount Hengshan, 13 metres high, were carved in the Ming Dynasty.
6. Yandao Temple on Mount Hengshan is, according to legend, the place where Taoist monks ascended to heaven to become celestials.

6

At dawn, we left Hunyuan county town in northern Shanxi Province and drove for four kilometres southeast until we arrived at the northwestern foot of Mount Hengshan. To actually visit Mount Hengshan, the famous North Sacred Mountain, was of course the main purpose of our trip. However, the large temple fair held on Mount Hengshan on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month was also a major attraction to us.

Stopping Decree Ridge

On the northwestern side of the mountain is a fault 30 kilometres long and 1,000 metres high with an inclined angle of 70 degrees. Viewing Mount Hengshan from the north, it looks like an immense precipice rising from the ground.

We continued to drive on and entered Jinlong (Golden Dragon) Valley. After passing through a long, dark, narrow tunnel, we turned to the east, went onto a hairpin mountain road, and arrived at Tingzhi (Stopping Decree) Ridge. This, according to legend, was the place where the First Emperor of the Qin was met by the Taoist monks on Mount Hengshan when he ascended the mountain 218 B.C. Later this place had became a meeting point for receiving emperors from many dynasties who came to hold sacrificial ceremonies or send funeral orations.

To the east of Stopping Decree Ridge, there is a small mountain village with the same name. It is the only village at the foot of the main peak of Mount Hengshan. There used to be Zhenwu Temple, the Dragon King Temple and the Mountain Viewing Pavilion adjacent to the village, but now only ruins can be found. Zhenwu Temple was the place where the imperial decrees were announced when the emperors sent their ministers to worship the mountain. Beside the parking lot now opened on Stopping Decree Ridge are rows of makeshift shops selling food, souvenirs and other local products.

The newly built Mountain Viewing Pavilion on Stopping Decree Ridge is located on the southern slope of the main peak of Mount Hengshan. Palace-style structures with red walls and yellow tiles are visible behind the shades of pines and cypresses.

1. With halls of red wall and yellow tile, Hengzong Temple looks very outstanding.
2. Tourists are fascinated by Bitter and Sweet Wells in Mysterious Well Pavilion.
3. Pilgrims bring home-made coloured paper clothes, pants, shoes and money to offer to the celestials on Mount Hengshan.

3

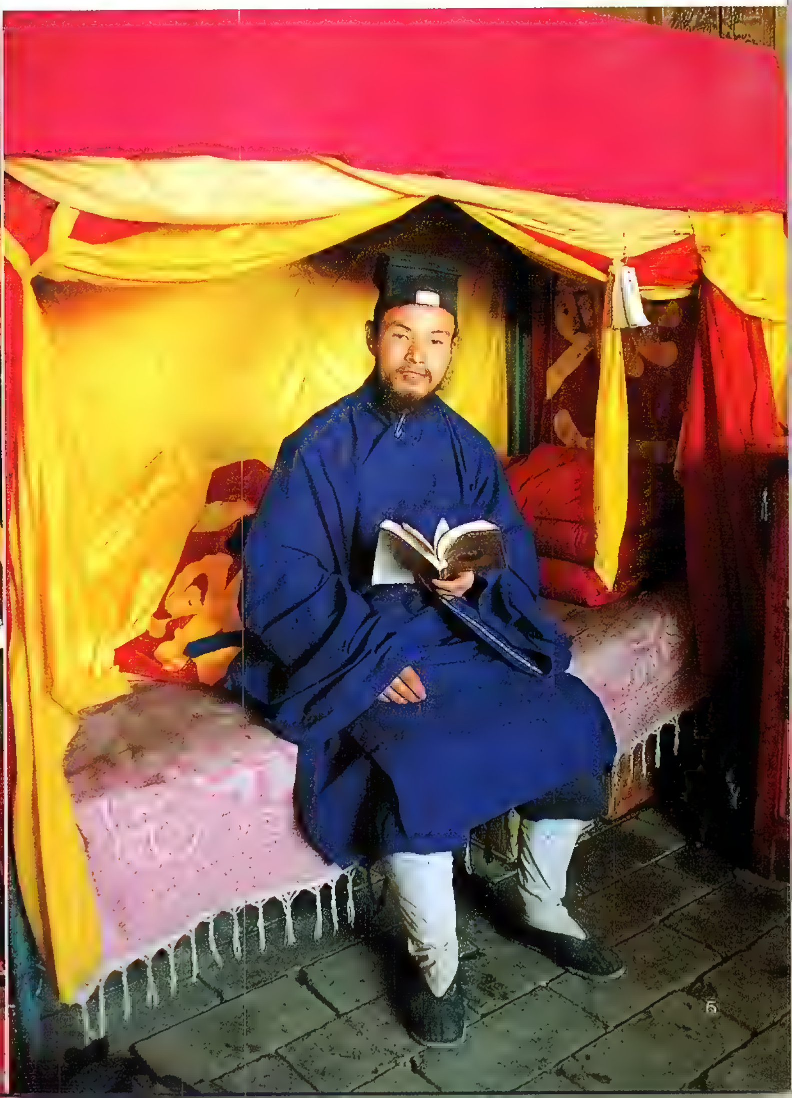
4. Hengzong Hall enshrines the Great Emperor of the North Mountain. The pilgrims have presented a horizontal banner with the characters "Great Emperor of North Mountain Replying Every Plea".
5. The abbot at Hengzong Temple not only has a celestial air and Taoist style but is also a man of learning.

Starting from Stopping Decree Ridge, a path with stone steps zigzags into the mountain. With morning mist floating around, we felt like ascending amidst the clouds. Passing the Big-Character Ridge, we saw two big characters "Heng Zong" carved into a stone. About 500 metres ahead, there was a stone screen carved with three large characters "Tiger Wind Entrance". Further ahead the mountain path turned sharply, and by the fork was a deep abyss. The mountain wind was blowing strongly and sounded like tigers' howls. Hence its name!

By the side of a cliff at the path entrance stood a tall ancient pine tree braving the strong wind. The tree is called Buddhist Palace Tree. Its roots were exposed like dragon claws holding onto the rocks. It is said that it has been there for more than 1,000 years, but is still prosperous. More interesting is Guolao Ridge with rows of small round pits which look as if left by donkey hoofs. According to legend, when Zhang Guolao, one of the famous Eight Immortals, came to Mount Hengshan to make pills of immortality and practise Taoism, the donkey he rode had left these hoof pits in the stone path. Hence the name Celestial Traces of Guolao. Nowadays, visitors to the mountain like to step in these pits, believing that they would be able to get some "celestial spirit".

Legend of Flying Stone Cave

Looking up from Guolao Ridge, temples on the main peak were clearly visible. Ascending along the stone steps of a shaded path, we found ourselves soon in front of a large stone cave enshrouded in a grove of cypresses and pine trees half way up the Flying Stone Peak. The interior of the cave looks like a square courtyard, about 200 square metres in area. With stone walls on three sides and facing a cliff on the other, it is called Flying Stone Cave, the first of the Eighteen Sites of Interest on Mount Hengshan. Found in the cave was Beiyue Resident Palace which was originally the main hall and also the oldest structure on the mountain. Later, after a new temple was built, this became the resident palace for the wife of the Great Emperor of the North Mountain. People also built a two-storey Dressing Tower and a Resident Palace on the Southern Rock. Inside the southern side hall of the resident palace there is a cave several hundred kilometres deep, leading to Hebei Province and further to the sea. It is said that the cave is a haven of spiritual snakes and large boas. So far no one dares to go into it, so it remains a mystery to this day.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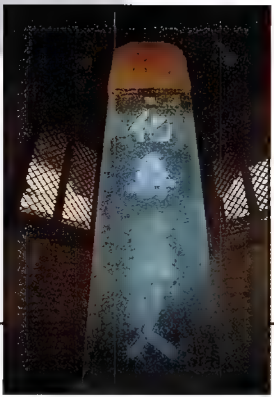
1. At sunset, the temples on Mount Hengshan are veiled in the shadow of the mountain.
2. It was said that the divination lots in the Celestial Meeting Hall are very efficacious. It has become an important item for tourists to ask for fortune.
3. The stone tablet with the inscription of Qing Emperor Kangxi

4. The statue of god enshrined in Big Dipper Tower looks very dignified.
5. Women who have no child or do not have enough children come to Nine Heaven Palace to pray for sons.
6. The goddess in Nine Heaven Palace is in charge of birth on earth, so it is often crowded with worshippers.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About this Flying Stone Cave, there was another story known as "A Spiritual Stone Flying East". Over 4,000 years ago, when King Shun came to Mount Hengshan, a huge stone flew out from Flying Stone Cave and dropped in front of the king. Five years later, on an inspection tour to Quyang County in Hebei, he was blockaded by a snowstorm. So he could only worship Mount Hengshan in the town far away from the mountain. Surprisingly the stone flow to Quyang. Later, people began to build halls and shrines on the huge stone, forming another site of Beiyue (North Mountain) Temple. The succeeding kings and emperors also went to this temple in Quyang to worship Mount Hengshan.

Walking northwest from Flying Stone Cave, we passed White Cloud Hall, Ten King Hall, Horse God Hall and Purple Rose Tower, all enshrining celestials and immortals of Taoism.

We continued to climb along the winding mountain path. After crossing Purple Blue Valley, we came to the main hall of Mount Hengshan. Behind the Chongling Gate on which hung a horizontal board inscribed with the characters "North Pillar Between Heaven and Earth", there is a steep flight of 103 stone steps leading to Hengzong Temple. Originally, it had 108 stone steps symbolizing the108 peaks on Mount Hengshan. But since Mount Wutai had become a Buddhist mountain, the five peaks on Mount Wutai should be deducted from the 108 peaks, hence 103 left. So the number of the stone steps had been changed accordingly.

At the top of the flight of stone steps is the Confucius Temple, the main hall of Mount Hengshan. Standing half way up the southern slope of Mount Hengshan, it was built in the Ming Dynasty. In the main hall is a tall gold-gilt statue of the Great Emperor of the North Mountain. On both of his sides stand four ministers and four generals.

Taoist monks were doing exercises. Amidst melodious Taoist music, the abbot, wearing a coloured Taoist robe embroidered with the diagram of the universe, led the monks to chant sutras and kneel down to pay worship, in extremely pious expression.

On the edge of the cliff west of the main hall, there is a stone in the shape of a chime. When struck, it sounds like cockcrow, hence the name "Golden Harbinger of Dawn". The usual way to the summit is from the main hall, going northeast and passing the White Dragon King Hall. It takes about two hours on foot. The summit is called "Three Peak Ridge" with only a narrow ridge. Erected on the summit is a stone tablet inscribed with the characters "The top of Mount Hengshan, the North Sacred Mountain; 2,017 metres above sea level".

The Summit of the Mountain

Descending from the southwestern side of the summit, we passed the South Gate to Heaven and saw a high cliff called Huixian (Celestial-Meeting) Cliff. A cave bearing the same name lies half way down the cliff. The temple built inside it is known as Celestial-Meeting Mansion. It is said that celestials then moved their meeting site from the top of the cliff to the temple to escape wind and rain. Consequently 27 statues of the celestials were enshrined in the temple. God of Happiness, God of Fortune and God of Longevity stand at the centre, franked with 24 celestials, including the most famous "Eight Immortals".

Outside the hall are Jade Emperor Tower and Imperial Tablet Pavilion with a tablet inscribed with Emperor Kangxi's calligraphy. The cliffs on the east and west sides of the hall were carved with inscriptions praising Mount Hengshan by famous scholars of the dynasties from the Song to the Qing (960-1911). Of them, the inscriptions the "Grand View of Heaven and Earth" and "A Cliff Looming Thousand Metres High" inscribed by Ming scholars are the most splendid. Each character measures over three metres high.

West of Celestial Meeting Mansion is Qinqi (Zither and Chess) Terrace, one of the famous scenic spots. The terrace is a narrow strip of land about two to three square metres in size sandwiched between two cliffs. Carved on the terrace is a stone chessboard, together with the large characters "Zither and Chess Terrace" on the cliff. Legend says that this was the place where celestials met and played music and chess. Not far from Zither and Chess Terrace is Nine Heaven Palace where the Holy Mother of Nine Heaven lived. Since it is believed as a place where people can beg for an heir, worshippers come in streams. Different from other temples of goddess, Nine Heaven Palace enshrines a few statues of male celestials.

Temple Fair on the Mountain

We stayed overnight in the hostel near the Ten-King Hall. At midnight the quiet moun-

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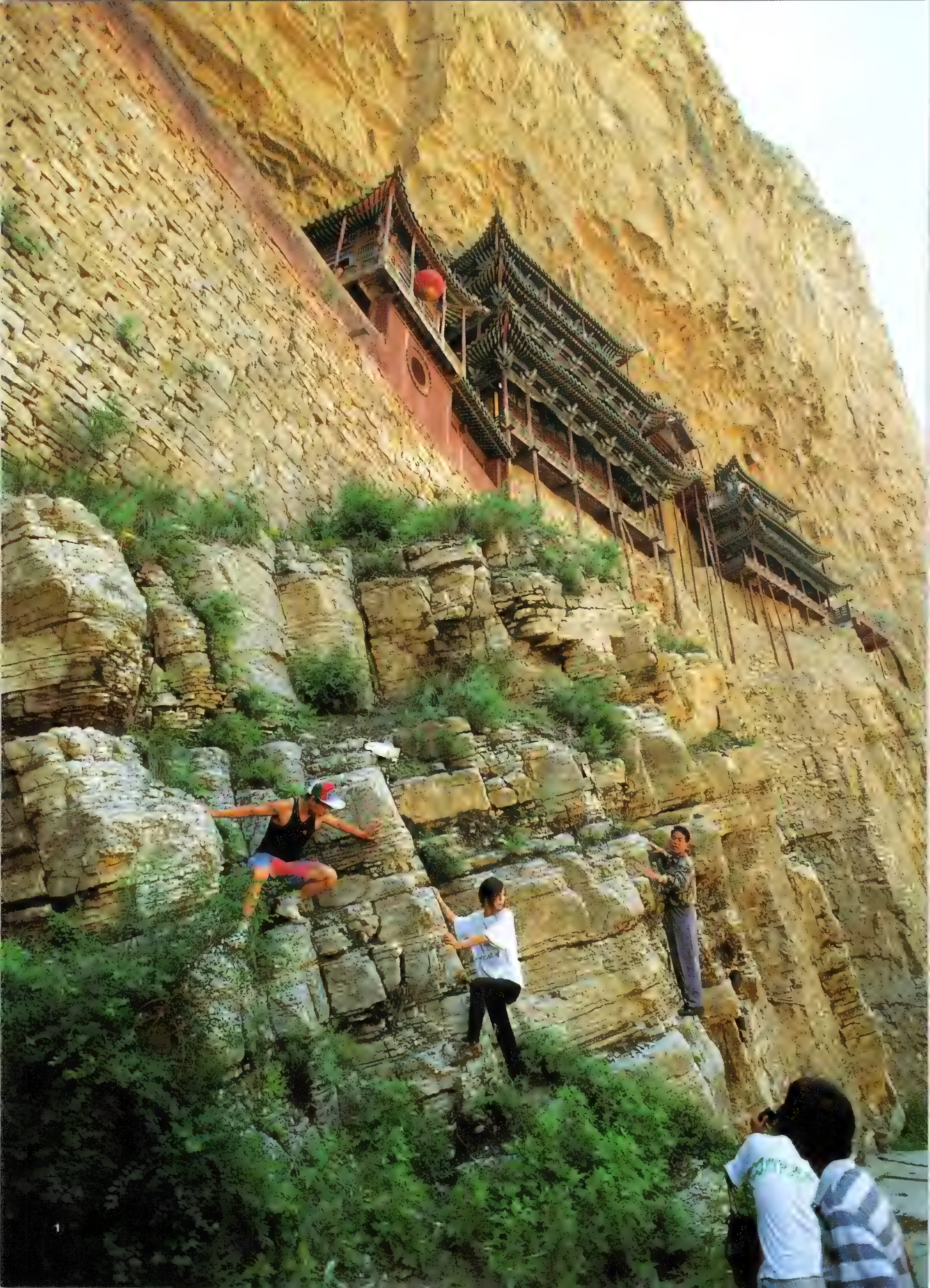

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1. Tourists taking snaps of astounding poses with Suspending Temple as the background
2. Monk Deru of Suspending Temple having meal on his brick bed
3. The abbot of the Resident Palace practising Taijiquan

2

4. The ruins of Flying Stone Hall at Beiyue Temple in Quyang County, Hebei Province
5. The strangely-shaped rocks on Thousand Buddha Ridge, one of the wonderful scenes on Mount Hengshan

ain village was awaken by a hubbub of voices. Vehicles were driving ip from the parking lot at Stopping Decree Ridge, while pilgrims limbing up in groups with electric and fire torches in their hands. Hengzong Temple on the mountain top was ablaze with lights amidst oud ritual music.

When we arrived at Hengzong Temple, we saw crowds of people kneel on the ground inside and outside the halls. With closed eyes and stick of burning incense planted on the ground in front of each of hem, they chanted sutras murmurously. Pilgrims believe that if they ome to pray to the Great Emperor of the North Sacred Mountain at he zero hour of the eighth day of the fourth lunar month, they are able o escape disasters.

The eighth day is also the day for the temple fair on Mount Hengshan. At daybreak, people began to move towards the main hall of Mount Hengshan. Most of them were pilgrims; others were visitors. Peddlers had already occupied good places along the pilgrimage way, nd cries of hawking could be heard everywhere around the temple.

The 1,400-Year-Old Suspending Temple

We took the west path, passing Chunyang (Pure Sun) Palace and he Suspending Root Pine down the mountain. After returning to Stopping Decree Ridge, we proceeded to Jinlong (Golden Dragon) Valley to visit Xuankong (Suspending) Temple.

Due to its perilous terrain, Golden Dragon Valley was a place strategists often contended for in history. Emperor Daowu of the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) sent 10,000 soldiers there to open up mountain paths, making it the entrance to the Central Plains. The Yang Family generals of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1279) also camped their roops there to guard the frontier. About 500 metres inside the valley, here rises a high steep cliff with an ancient architectural structure suspending half way on the cliff. This is none other than the most famous Suspending Temple on Mount Hengshan.

Ascending along a stone staircase and passing a pavilion, we came to a neat square courtyard. Against the cliff is a two-storey hall. Its ground floor houses the abbot's bedroom and the Buddhist Hall, and its first floor are the Three Buddha Hall, Supreme Hall and the Hall of Guan Yu, the God of War. The wooden carving statue of Goddess of Mercy and the bodiless clay statues of the Three Buddhas are rare pieces of the temple.

We climbed up along a suspending staircase which was so narrow that could only let one person pass. There are groups of iron nails in the shape of lotus flowers on the steps, polished shiny by the feet of climbers. They were used to protect the wooden staircase, but Buddhist followers have different understandings. Stepping on the nails, they feel that they are "stepping on the lotus flowers" and gradually cultivating themselves to perfectionism.

The temple is of wooden structure, and the most unique and amazing is its "suspension". During its construction, holes were dug into the cliff and thick wooden pillars were inserted into the holes as the foundation of the building. The wooden sticks supporting the pillars are quite loose; a push by hand would make them shake. But if the building is overloaded, the sticks will certainly play a supporting role.

There are altogether more than 40 rooms in the Suspension Temple. Staircases and corridors zigzag like a maze. Without a guide, you will get lost in the temple and miss many wonderful views. This rare and unique structure built in early Northern Wei Dynasty, and weather-beaten for more than 1,400 years and even having experienced strong earthquakes, is still hanging on the cliff without much change of its frames. It is only naturally that it has become one of the wonders on earth.

Translated by M. Q.

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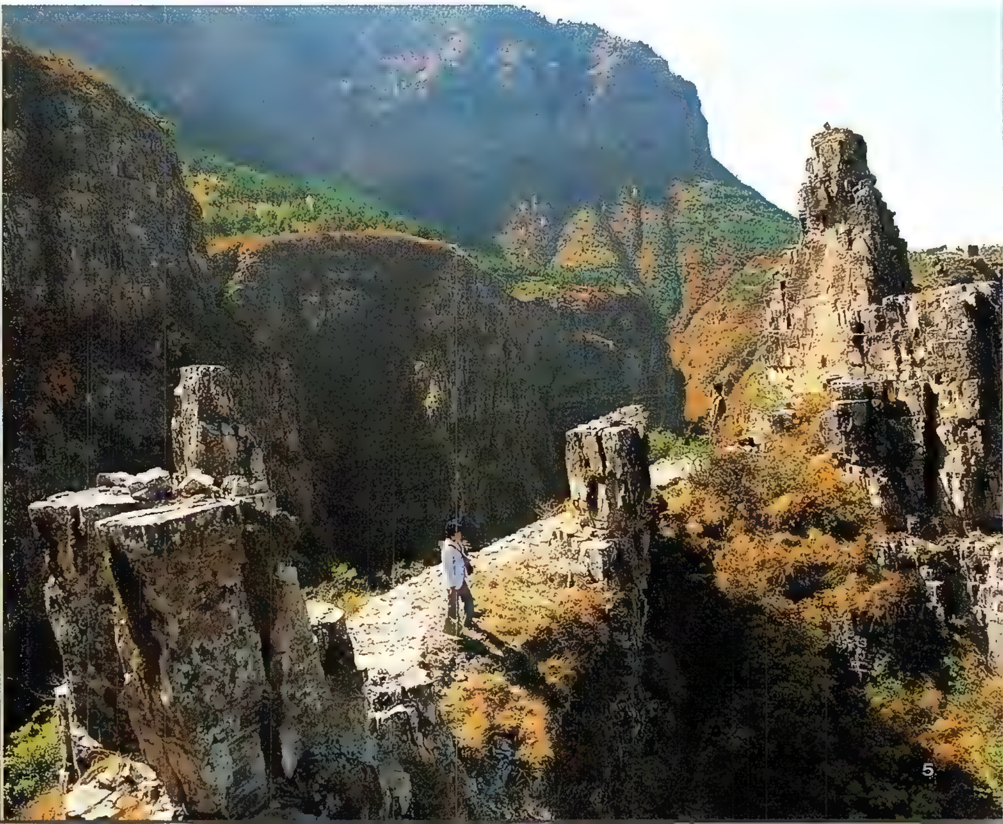
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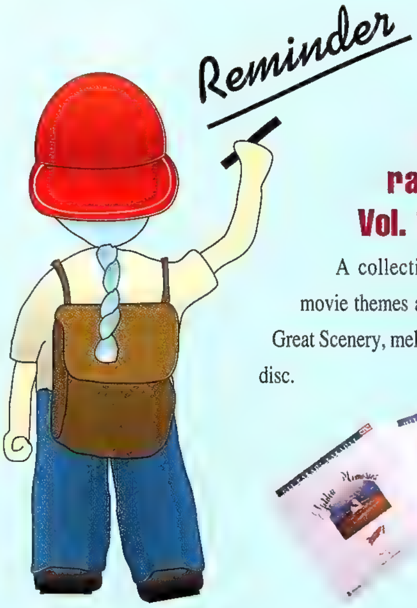

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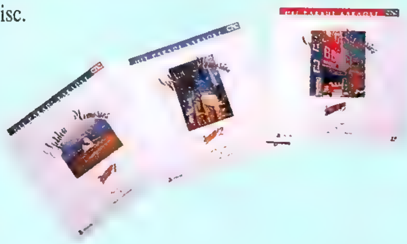

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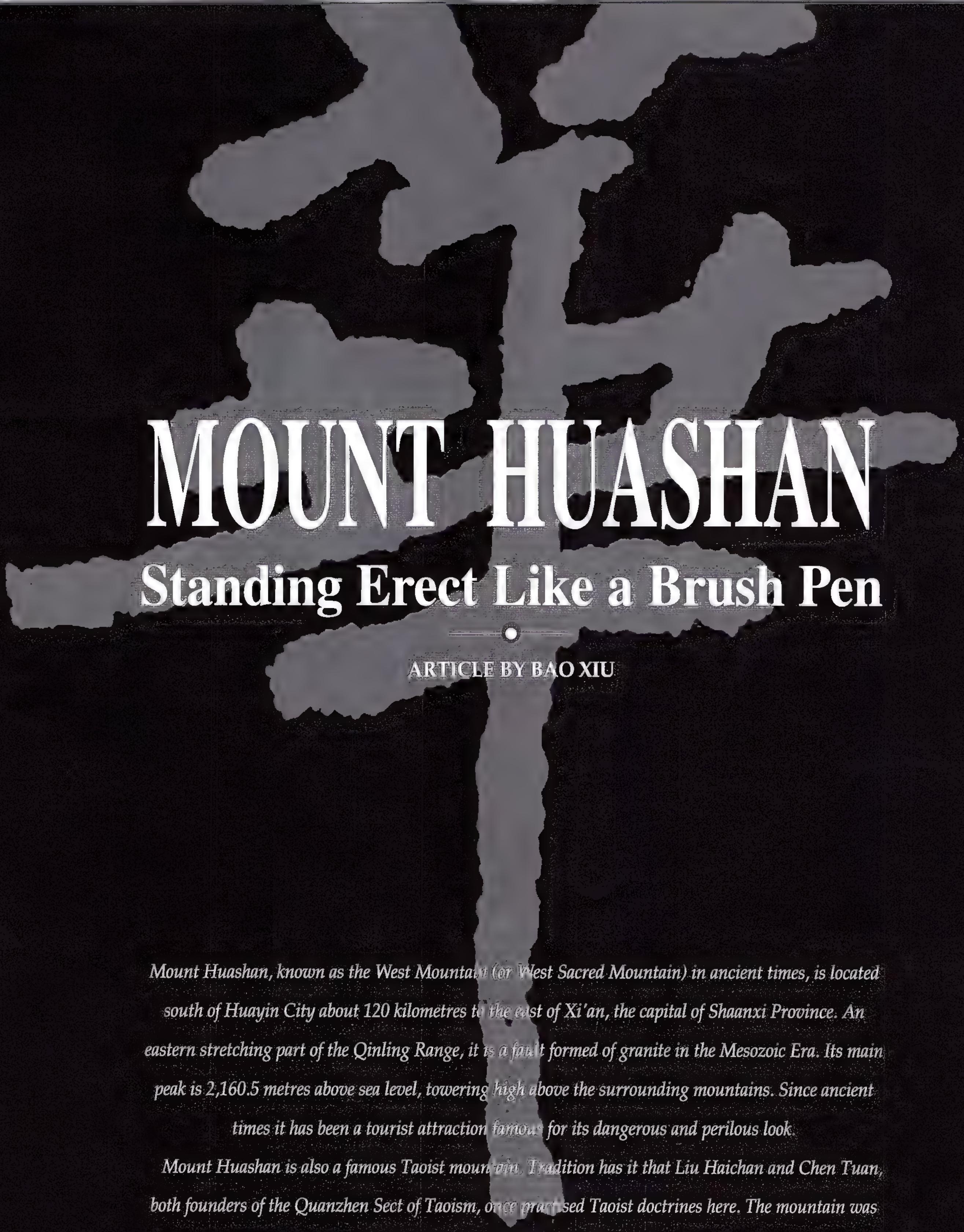


MOUNT HUASHAN

Standing Erect Like a Brush Pen

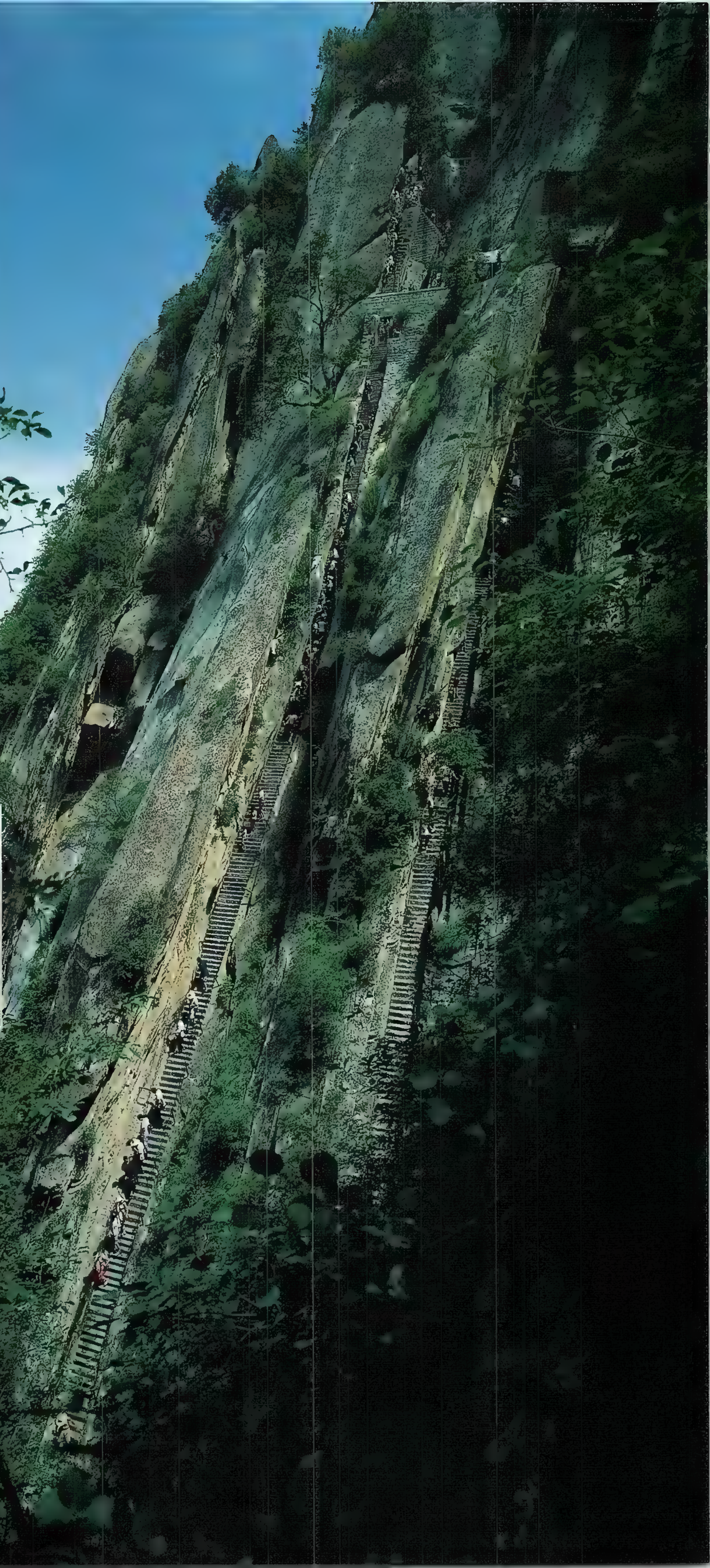
ARTICLE BY BAO XIU

Mount Huashan, known as the West Mountain (or West Sacred Mountain) in ancient times, is located south of Huayin City about 120 kilometres to the east of Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi Province. An eastern stretching part of the Qinling Range, it is a fault formed of granite in the Mesozoic Era. Its main peak is 2,160.5 metres above sea level, towering high above the surrounding mountains. Since ancient times it has been a tourist attraction famous for its dangerous and perilous look.

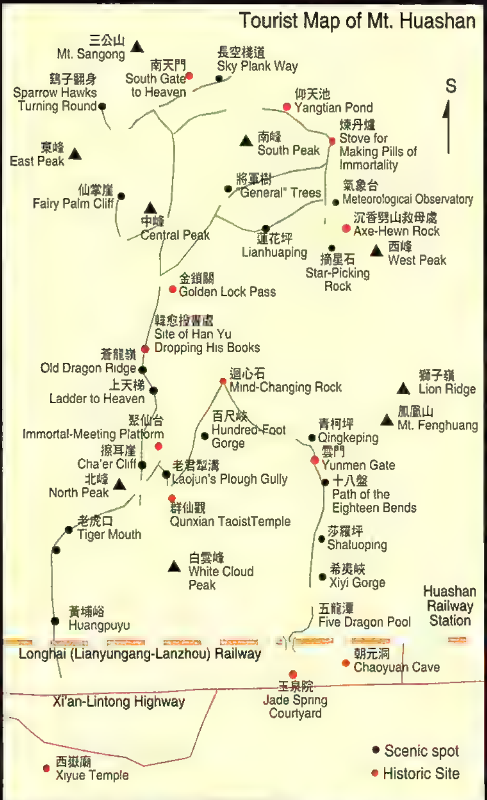
Mount Huashan is also a famous Taoist mountain. Tradition has it that Liu Haichan and Chen Tuan, both founders of the Quanzhen Sect of Taoism, once practised Taoist doctrines here. The mountain was thus regarded as the Fourth Taoist Mountain.

Moreover, Mount Huashan is also one of the Five Sacred Mountains worshipped by past emperors. After Emperor Wudi (r. 140-87 B.C.) of the Western Han Dynasty went to do the first worshipping to the mountain, many emperors of later dynasties followed suit, offering sacrifices at the Xiyue (West Mountain) Temple at the foot of the mountain. But no records show any emperor had ascended the mountain, probably because the mountain was too dangerously steep for them.

The White Emperor Shaohao, who was granted the title "The Great Emperor of the West Mountain", is now enshrined at the South Gate to Heaven at the top of the mountain and at the Xiyue Temple at its foot.



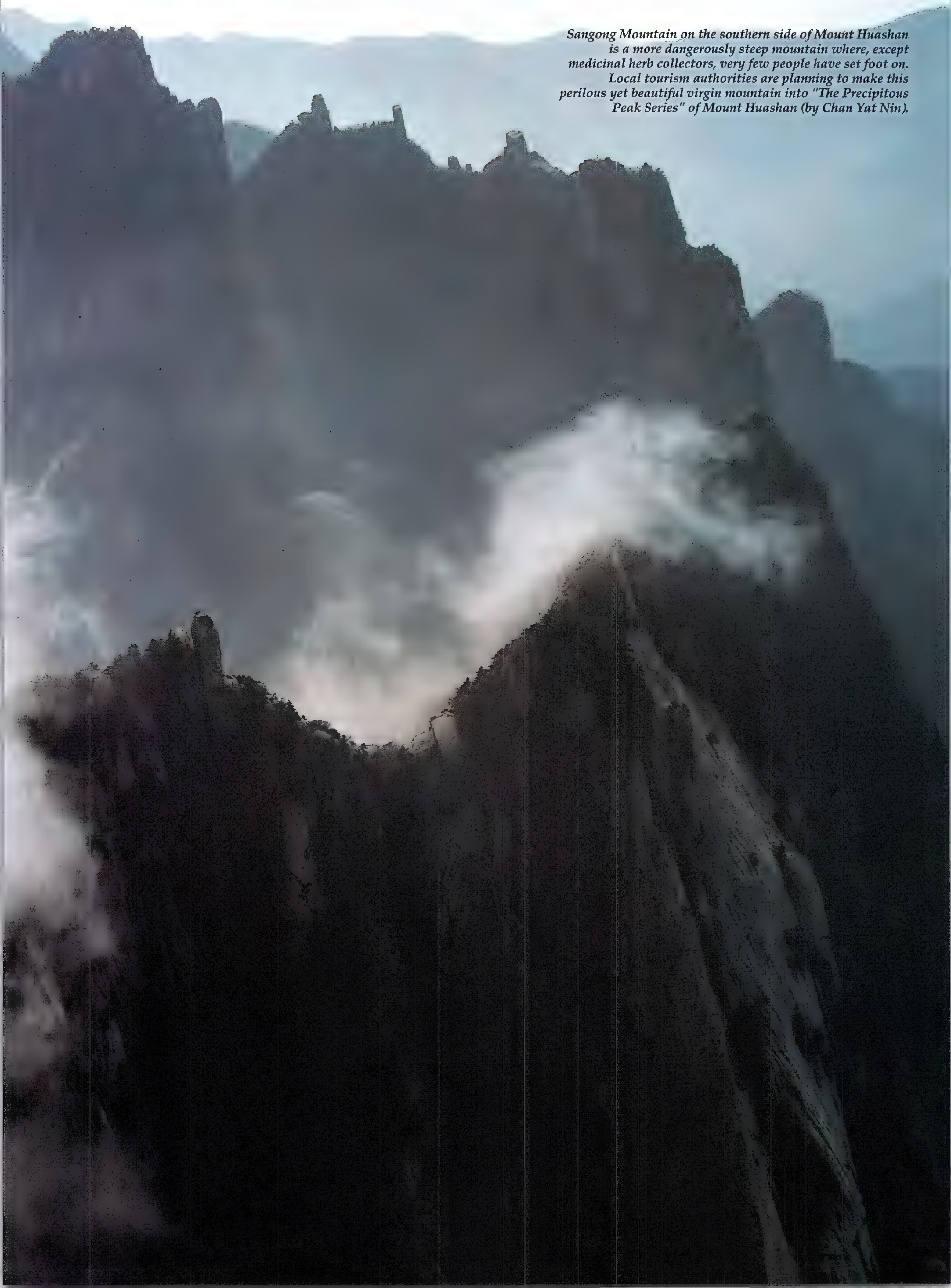
Thousand-Foot Cliff is the first natural barrier on the way to the top of Mount Huashan. Because it is dangerously steep and narrow, accidents often took place here during busy tourist seasons. Today, a new "Ladder to Heaven" has been carved on the precipice (by Huang Jixian).



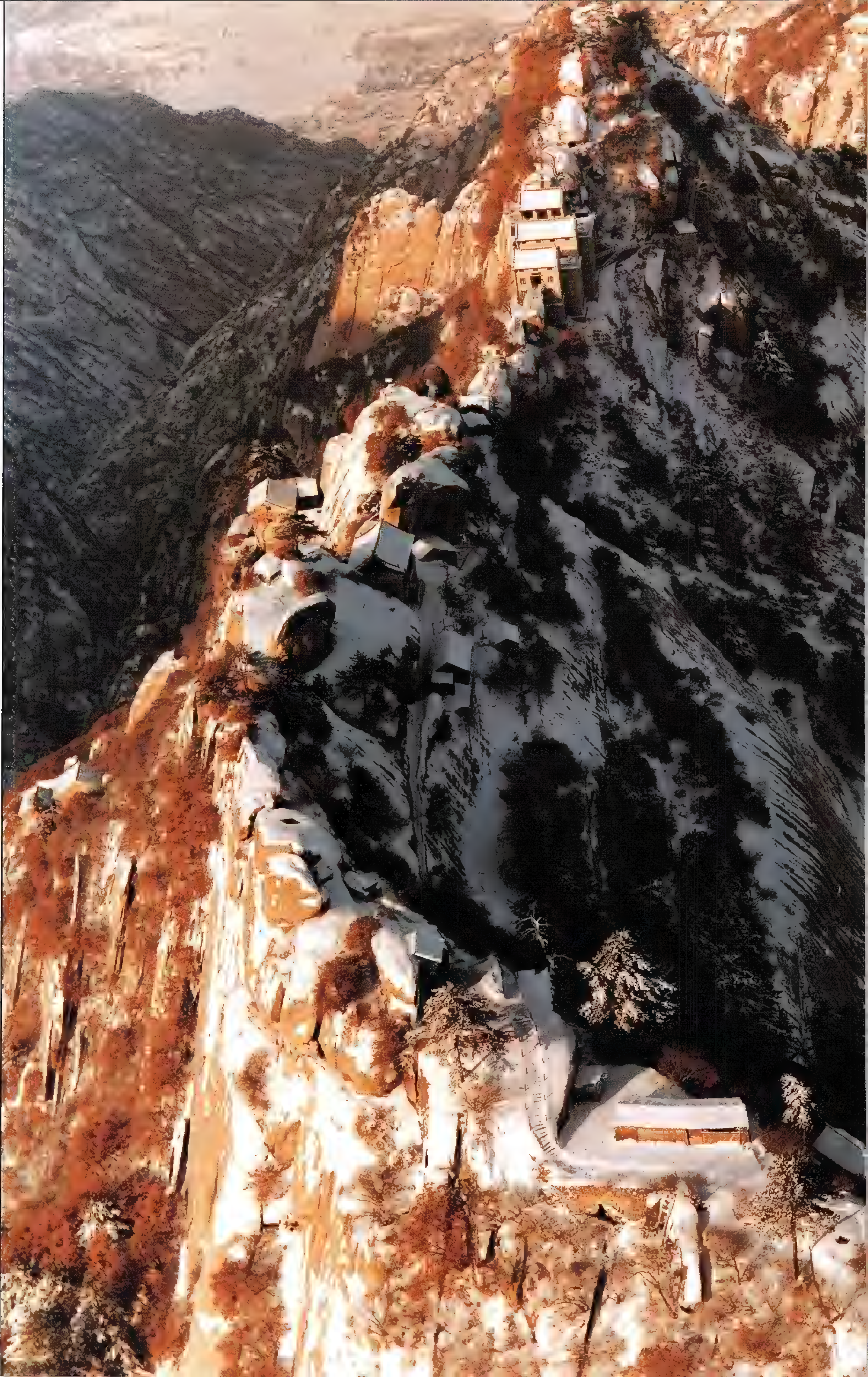
Tourist Map of Mt. Huashan

三公山
Mt. Sangong
長空棧道
Sky Plank Way
南天門
South Gate to Heaven
鷂子翻身
Sparrow Hawks Turning Round
S
仰天池
Yangtian Pond
煉丹爐
Stove for Making Pills of Immortality
南峰
South Peak
東峰
East Peak
將軍樹
"General" Trees
氣象台
Meteorological Observatory
仙掌崖
Fairy Palm Cliff
中峰
Central Peak
沉香劈山救母處
Axe-Hewn Rock
蓮花坪
Lianhuaping
摘星石
Star-Picking Rock
西峰
West Peak
金鎖關
Golden Lock Pass
韓愈投書處
Site of Han Yu Dropping His Books
蒼龍嶺
Old Dragon Ridge
迴心石
Mind-Changing Rock
獅子嶺
Lion Ridge
上天梯
Ladder to Heaven
聚仙台
Immortal-Meeting Platform
百尺峽
Hundred-Foot Gorge
青柯坪
Qingkeping
鳳凰山
Mt. Fenghuang
擦耳崖
Cha'er Cliff
老君犁溝
Laojun's Plough Gully
雲門
Yunmen Gate
北峰
North Peak
十八盤
Path of the Eighteen Bends
群仙觀
Qunxian TaoistTemple
老虎口
Tiger Mouth
莎羅坪
Shaluoping
白雲峰
White Cloud Peak
希夷峽
Xiyi Gorge
Huashan Railway Station
黃埔峪
Huangpuyu
五龍潭
Five Dragon Pool
Longhai (Lianyungang-Lanzhou) Railway
朝元洞
Chaoyuan Cave
玉泉院
Jade Spring Courtyard
Xi'an-Lintong Highway
西嶽廟
Xiyue Temple
● Scenic spot
● Historic Site

The magnificent and perilous Mount Huashan draws many photographers to it (by Chan Yat Nin).



Sangong Mountain on the southern side of Mount Huashan is a more dangerously steep mountain where, except medicinal herb collectors, very few people have set foot on. Local tourism authorities are planning to make this perilous yet beautiful virgin mountain into "The Precipitous Peak Series" of Mount Huashan (by Chan Yat Nin).



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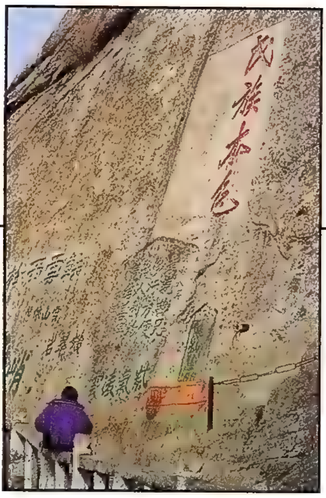

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1. *The North Peak viewed from the place "Where Han Yu Dropping His Books" at the top of the Old Dragon Ridge (by Qin Xiaoping)*
2. *In the winter of 1936, Chiang Kai-shek visited Mount Huashan and wrote the inscription "The True Nature of the Nation" (by Qin Xiaoping).*
3. *Old Dragon Ridge with sheer precipices on both sides. Tradition has it that Han Yu, a great scholar of the Tang Dynasty, was so frightened that he dropped his books when he visited here. In ancient times there was no railing on the ridge (by Qin Xiaoping).*
4. *The North Peak, also known as the Cloud Platform Peak, at the height of 1,614 metres above sea level, stands uniquely by one side (by Chan Yat Nin).*

In May every year visitors flow to Mount Huashan from all parts of the country, and the special tourist train from Xi'an to this site has to put on extra ones to meet the needs of the mountain climbers.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the train reached the Huashan Railway Station. Following the crowds of visitors, I walked out of the station and headed for Yuquan (Jade Spring) Courtyard at the mountain pass. The long street before the Jade Spring Courtyard was more crowded than usual, as the traditional Huashan Temple Fair was ging on. The business in the restaurants, hotels and inns was exceptionally brisk. But the busiest were the stalls selling or renting necessities for mountain climbing. A stall owner hawked: "Ladies, take off your high-heeled shoes, please. The road ahead is steep and perilous. Change into sneakers, or you won't be able to climb the mountain." The effect was obvious, as city girls swarmed to the stalls. When I entered the mountain pass I found every one, in addition to wearing sneakers, had a bamboo walking stick in hand. Some even had a long electric torch slung across the shoulder. They looked exactly like mountaineers.

Elderly women who came as tourists as well as pilgrims, all wearing dark scarves, dark clothes, dark pointed shoes and dark leg wrappings. An incense bag lung over the shoulder, and a walking stick in hand, they walked faster on the mountain path than most of us.

Mount Huashan at Night

The four-metre-wide road leading to the mountain was paved with colourful granite slabs. After Shaping, the road became steep. On either side of the deep valley were sheer granite cliffs. By the time I reached the Path of the Eighteen Bends, it was dusk. But when I raised my head to gaze

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1. From the top of the North Peak one can see the East, South, West and Central peaks towering in a grou
above the surrounding mountains (by Huang Jixian).
2. In the picture, the big peak is the East Peak, the small one on the left is the Central Peak (by Huang Jixian

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through the dark valley at the western peak at the end of the road, the peak, set off by the blue sky, was still bathed in the tangerine glow of the setting sun. It looked more mysterious than a fairyland. I consulted my wrist watch, it was just six o'clock.

Step by step I crept over the Path of the Eighteen Bends and passed the Cloud Gate, the road abruptly turned flat. As the evening wind soughed, "the autumn chill" was fell in the air. The place was called Qingkeping, a tableland half way to the summit. It was a good place for visitors to rest and eat food. In the past there was only a solitary temple here hidden amongst ancient trees. It was a place where, during the day, people burnt incense and did worshipping and at night spread straw on the floor and slept.

But today, Qingkeping has developed into "a busy bussiness centre" in the deep mountain. The mountain road is flanked by makeshift low shops, teahouses, restaurants and inns, all brightly lit up. On the stone benches along either side of the "street" sat tourists on their way up or down the mountain.

Mind-Changing Rock and Thousand-Foot Cliff

After a break for food and drink, I continued to climb the winding path following the crowd. The higher we climbed, the steeper the path became, and more and more people stopped to take breath. Some people were forced to give up and returned to Qingkeping for the night, before going down the mountain the next day.

Before long, I found the truth. Not far ahead, some people turned their flashlights at a huge rock carved with three big characters,

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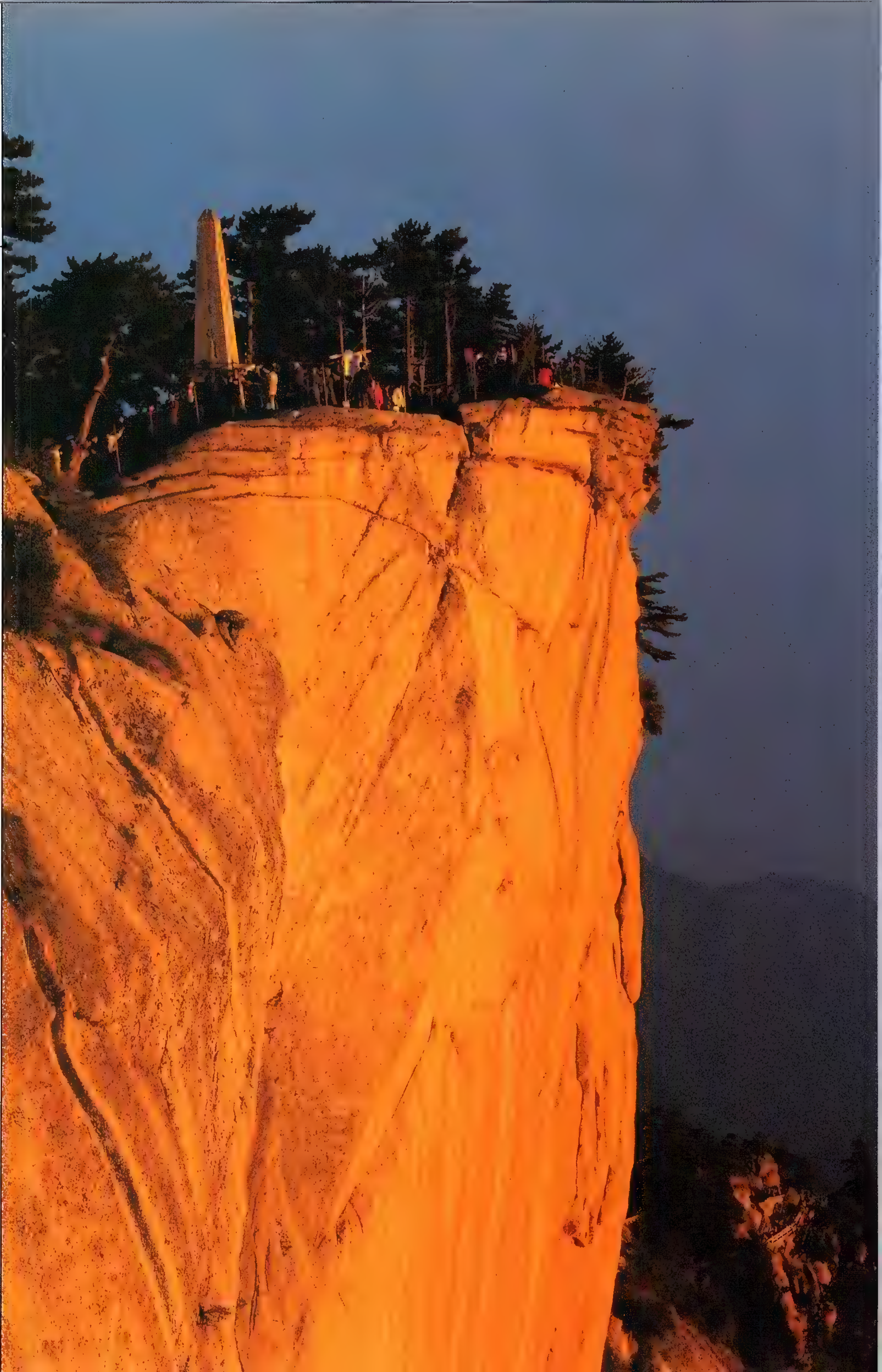

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1. Fairy Palm Cliff on the East Peak is a best spot to watch sunrise (by Qin Xiaoping).
2. The raised West Peak is the most eye-catching among the five peaks (by Wang Shouping).
3 . The mountain looks more magnificent in snow and mist (by Huang Jixian)
4. The White Cloud Peak behind the North Peak (by Qin Xiaoping).

"Mind-Changing Rock" covered by a thick layer of mosses. The inscription was a discouragement to the weak but a challenge to the strong-minded.

Along a long row of rock steps, I climbed for about 10 minutes and reached the end of the stairs to find a huge sheer cliff before me. I turned to look at the left side: two lines of steep rock steps were carved out of the sheer precipice, about 80 metres high. Atop the rock steps were two dim road lamps. On the rock steps two long rows of lights moved slowly upward or downward, which looked like the stars in the sky viewed from the bottom of a well. This is Mount Huashan's first dangerous spot – the Thousand-Foot Cliff.

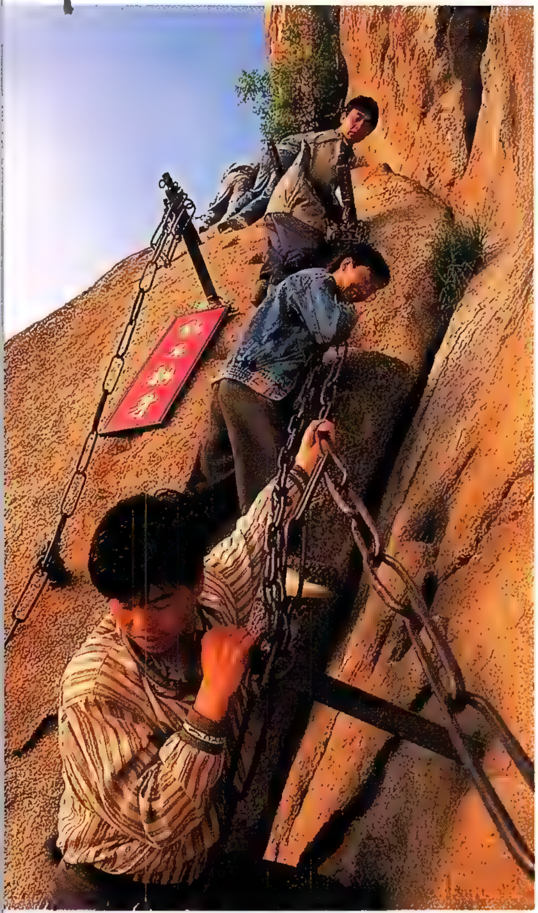
Although it was not my first time to climb this "Ladder to Heaven", I still felt timid when I stepped on it. The rock passage was so narrow that two people were hardly to go past from the opposite sides. The steps were very sheer and steep. A step miss, you're likely to land your foot on the head of the climber at your heels. As the saying goes: "Don't look down when you climb a height." However, out of curiosity, I cast my eyes downward from time to time. Aware that I was hanging high over a dark, bottomless abyss, and hearing the howling of the evening wind, my heart thumped fast. Within five minutes I broke out in a cold sweat. All I could do was to grip the iron chains tightly and inched forward with all my might.

Today, the Thousand-Foot Cliff remains unchanged, but the climbing is comparatively easier, because a new stairway has been carved out beside the old one. Visitors are divided into two streams: the upward and the downward.

The old saying goes: "There is only one path leading up to Mount Huashan since ancient times." It is absolutely true, especially at the dangerous Thousand-Foot Cliff. But some changes have taken place since a tragedy occurred 10 years ago. It was also in May that year. Visitors to Mount Huashan were exceptionally numerous. When they came to this vital passage, those ascending the mountain and those descending refused to make way for one another. As a result the thick iron chain failed to withstand the heavy weight and broke. An accident happened. After that, a new row of steps was carved.

Connected with the Thousand-Foot Cliff is the Hundred-Foot Gorge Beyond it is a section of flat road leading to Qunxian (Immortals) Temple. Walking on the flat road made me feel relaxed both in body and mind. But farther up,

1. *Among the four peaks at the top of Mount Huashan is a small basin with dense forests and gurgling streams (by Wang Shouping).*
2. *Cockcrow Rock in front of the Golden Lock Pass (by Qin Xiaoping)*
3. *On the way to the Chess-Playing Tower there is a cliff called "Sparrow Hawks Turning Round", which is one of the most dangerous places on Mount Huashan (by Qin Xiaoping).*
4. *The Chess-Playing Tower, located on the southeastern side of the East Peak, is said to be the place where Emperor Taizu of the Song Dynasty played chess with the priest Chen Tuan before he became emperor (by Chan Yat Nin).*



the road crossing the Laojun's Plough Gully bogged me down in crises again. However, after passing a cliff I reached the North Peak.

I collapsed to the ground to take a break. In the south the four peaks – the East, South, West and Central – looked especially imposing at night. Viewed from this vantage point, a long string of lights was moving slowly forward like stars or fireflies at the section from Cha'er (Ear-Touching) Cliff to Canglong (Old Dragon) Ridge and Jinsuo (Golden Lock) Pass.

Most of the visitors from Xi'an and the central Shaanxi plain were hurrying on with their journey at night. Unlike those from other parts of the country who could spend two or three days on their trip, they must reach the East Peak the same night, lodge there and watch sunrise early the next morning. Then they would turn to visit other peaks. In the afternoon they must hurry back to the pass at the foot of the mountain to catch the train for home.

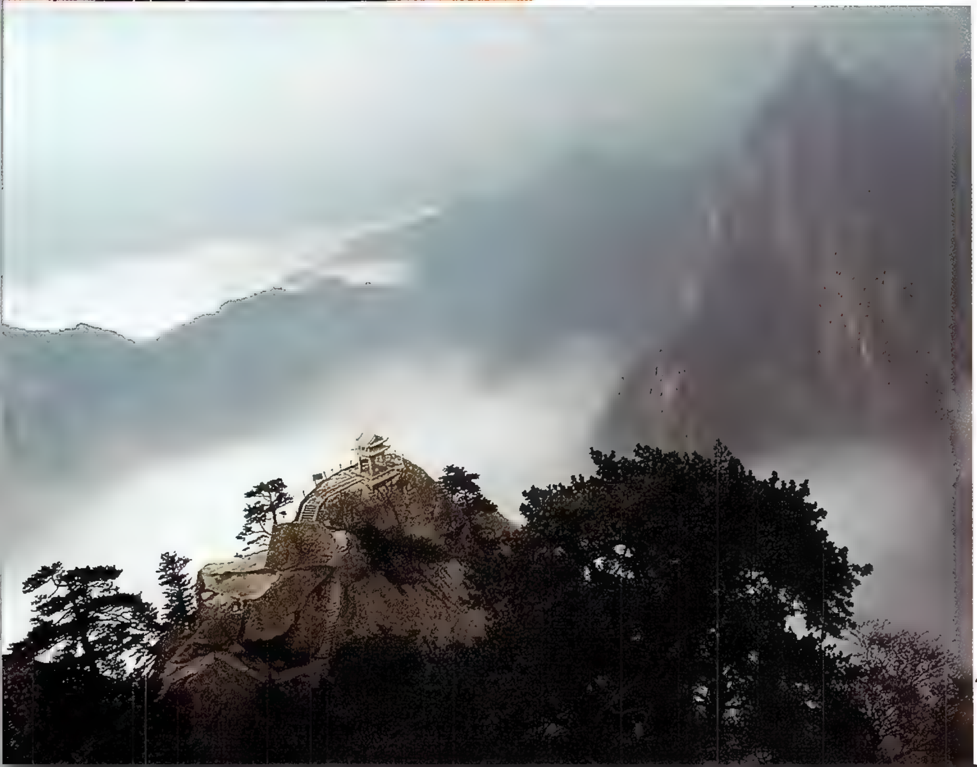
However, I put up for the night at Zhenwu Hall on the North Peak.

King-of-Hell Rock and Old Dragon Ridge

The next morning I awoke to find snowflakes drifting in the sky. It was a white world of clouds, mist and snow in the far distance. The West Peak could be dimly seen. Nearby, mountain peach blossoms were covered by a thick layer of snow. It is a rare sight of snow in May in the central Shaanxi plain, but not on Mount Huashan at a height of over 2,000 metres above sea level.

After breakfast, however, it cleared up and the clouds dispersed. I walked past the Ear-Touching Cliff in the snow, climbed over to Ladder to Heaven and reached the ridge of the King-of-Hell Rock. At this height on the mountain one has a panoramic view of the surrounding peaks. Except the North Peak, the other four are closely linked, thrusting into the sky. Their four sides are sheer precipices, so steep as if they were hewn out by knife. The surface of the precipices is very smooth, without a trace of damage by the elements. The whole mountain looks like an integral huge rock inlaid in the Qinling Range.

Following the stream of people, I climbed up the Old Dragon Ridge. On the left side of



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1. The Sky Plank Way is the most dangerous spot on Mount Huashan. It is a hanging plank bridge built especially for those who want to test their courage (by Huang Jixian).
2. The Greart Emperor of the West Mountain is worshipped in the huge stone shrine on the steep precipice outside the South Gate to Heaven (by Chan Yat Nin).
3. Mount Huashan is an integral whole with very few traces damaged by the elements (by Qin Xiaoping).
4. Country women often come to fulfil their promises at the Immortal-Gathering Lawn near the South Gate to Heaven (by Chan Yat Nin).

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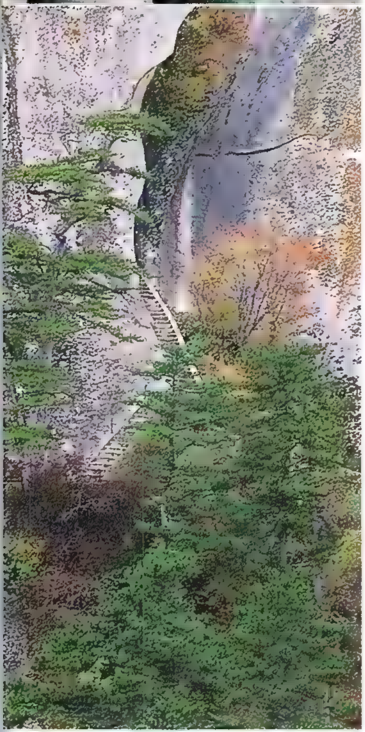
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the ridge is a deep valley covered by a dense forest of trees; on the right side is a sheer precipice. I looked down at Qingkeping I walked past the previous night. The towering ancient pine trees there were as small as were tiny blades of parched grass.

When I reached the top of the ridge, I found more stone steps carved on the bare ridge of the Old Dragon Ridge. I was rejoiced that Nature had granted us this "hanging ladder". Otherwise, people could never climb to the perilous four peaks at the summit of the mountain. Without the Old Dragon Ridge, the summit of the mountain would have remained a virgin peak even today. By noon the snow on the mountains began to melt in the bright sunshine.

I came to a path winding up among tall pine trees in different shapes. The pine trees on Mount Huashan are very unique, forming one of the attractions for mountain visitors.

A Differrent World Beyond Golden Lock Pass

When I got to the Golden Lock Pass, I relaxed my feet in a teahouse. Surrounded by unusually huge pine trees, the place was flat and had a good location.

"A different world appears after the Golden Lock Pass." This folk rhyme about Mount Huashan is a true depiction of the actual situation. The pass tower stands erect on a high wall built of granite stones, with one side facing a perilous precipice. It holds the strategic point to the East, Central, South and West peaks. After the pass the road branches off. There are several gentle paths leading to each of the peaks. Although Mount Huashan has deep precipices on its four sides, the four peaks on the top form a beautiful basin, where mountain flowers of different colours: red, yellow and white, blossom in May, and stream water run under stone bridges. The gentle mountain slopes of the mountains are overgrown with verdant woods like those south of the Yangtse River.

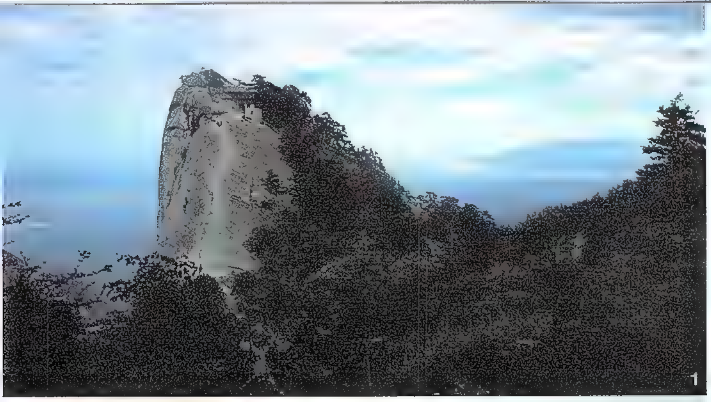
By the time I walked out of the basin and embarked on the dangerous path at the Fish Back of the West Peak, dusk had set in. The Lianhua (Lotus Flower) Rock at the top of the peak looked very beautiful under the rosy sky.

That night I lodged in the Bright Cloud Palace Inn run by Taoist priests. It was an old house all made of wood: stairs, walls, floor and beds.

As soon as I woke up the next morning, I hastily climbed up the West Peak's highest place – the Star-Picking Rock to watch the sunrise. But unfortunately, I was too late; the red sun had already left the horizon. From here the top of the East Peak – the best plac on Mount Huashan to watch the sunrise – was in view, packed with dark figures. The Yellow River was like a golden ribbon dividing the thick loess into Shanxi and Shaanxi.

From the Star-Picking Rock I went to the famous Axe-Hewn Rock, by which people waiting in a long queue to take photos.

That day, from early morning till dusk, I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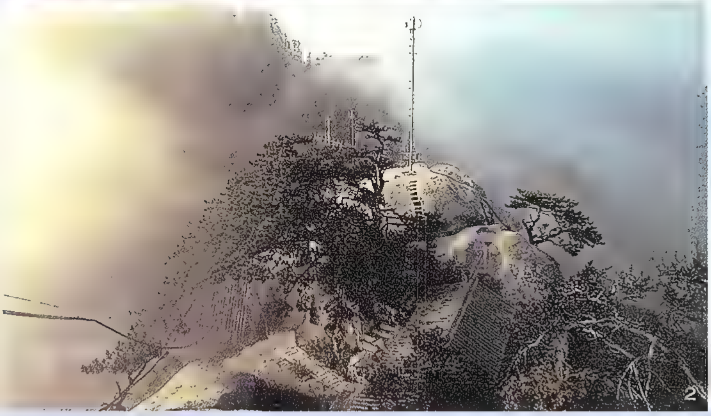
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1. The West Peak viewed from the Stove for Making Pills of Immortality. At its back in the distance are the Weihe River and the Yellow River which turns first to the south and then to the east (by Huang Jixian).
2. The Bright Cloud Palace and the meteorological observatory at the top of the West Peak (by Chan Yat Nin)
3. The memorial pagoda built at the top of the West Peak by General Yang Hucheng to commemorate his climbing of the mountain (by Huang Jixian)
4. Fish Back Ridge lies between the West Peak and South Peak (by Qin Xiaoping).
5. Photo taking At Axe-Hewn Rock (by Chan Yat Nin)

visited the dangerous spots along the outer line of the three peaks on top of Mount Huashan. It was a day of astounding experiences.

Viewing Mountains from the Top of Goose-Perching Peak

The next day, on my way to the South Peak, a porter told me many stories about accidents happened on Mount Huashan. Most cases concerned young men and women who came here to commit suicide for the sake of love.

As we talked, we arrived at the top of the Goose-Perching Peak – the highest peak among the five peaks of the mountain. Sitting on a huge granite rock, we saw, in the glow of the setting sun, the undulating Qinling Range stretching like waves into the horizon. I lay down on the highest place on the peak, imbing in the beautiful scenery around me.

When I descended the mountain, my legs failed me; I could not help dashing down the stone steps. Nevertheless, it was dusk by the time I left the entrance to the mountain. That night I stayed at the hotel outside the Jade Spring Courtyard.

The next morning I rented a motor tricycle and rode directly to Xiyue Temple eight kilometres away from the mountain. There was no sentries at the side gate of the temple. The troops which had stationed there for over 20 years seemed to have left. Barracks could still be seen at the temple. Some workers were busy repairing the old halls and shrines.

Like any other mountain monasteries, Xiyue Temple is in the style of imperial palace. It has tall and thick enclosure walls, inner walls and imposing halls. The only difference is, in the centre of the inner walls, there is a high platform for viewing the mountain peaks. This huge platform was built for visiting emperors. Because Mount Huashan is dangerously precipitous, no emperors of the past dynasties dared to ventured it. Instead, they viewed the mountain peaks and held memorial ceremony on this platform. On fine days, at the top of the Longevity Tower, people can clearly see the five peaks of Mount Huashan in the colour of dark reddish purple. In the front courtyard of the temple there used to be a stone tablet erected by Emperor Taizong (r. 627-649), of the Tang Dynasty when he came to worship the mountain. The tablet, about 10 metres high, was said to be the biggest among the stone tablets in China. But at the end of the Tang Dynasty, when Huang Cao and his insurrectional troops passed here on their way to attack the capital city, Chang'an, he ordered his soldiers to burn down the stone tablet to show their determination to eliminate the Tang Dynasty. The tablet's base still remains intact there, with small fragments scattered around it. A careful examination will find the distinct traces of broken inscriptions and the carvings of figure and motif.

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

Mount Tai

— The East Mountain

TEXT BY AN GE

Climatic Conditions in Mount Tai Area

Month Description	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Average Temperature (°C)	-8.6	-6.7	-1.6	5.6	11.3	15.6	17.8	17.1	12.5	6.8	-0.2	-6.1
Average Highest Temperature (°C)	-5.0	-3.1	2.3	9.7	15.2	19.3	20.6	19.9	15.8	10.4	3.4	-2.5
Average Lowest Temperature (°C)	-11.6	-9.7	-4.8	2.1	7.9	12.4	15.2	14.7	9.8	3.9	-3.1	-9.2
Rainfall (mm)	15.5	16.9	30.4	54.6	58.3	142.8	337.5	238.0	118.9	67.6	34.6	17.1

Ascending Mount Tai is a traditional tourist item for the Chinese people. Though only 1,545 metres high, about one-sixth of the height of Mount Qomolangma in Tibet, the mountain looks sedate yet majestic. In traditional Chinese culture, especially according to the philosophical sect of Taoism, Mount Tai is a divine mountain, a sacred mountain with a green dragon as its totem. The Taoists believe that Mount Tai is the birthplace as well as burial site of the Chinese nation, the site which decides the alternation of generations and the rise and down of the country of the dragon that is China. Generation after generation of the Chinese people have been faithful to this belief, that can be seen from the devoted expression of the aged pilgrims who climb arduously along the mountain path leading to the summit. Walking with a stick, they negotiate laboriously the stairway, amounting to more than 7,000 steps, to show their devotion and determination.

Along both sides of the mountain path one find a great number of inscribed stone tablets of various dynasties. Interesting stories or philosophic theories can be derived from any one of the temple or archway seen on the way. The tourist can appreciate the age-old accumulation of Chinese history while enjoying beautiful scenery of the mountain. As a matter of fact, Mount Tai itself is a painting as well as a cultural relic.

Master YunHai of Puzhao Temple (by Zhang Rendong)

Black Dragon Pool (by Zhang Rendong)

The path leading to the top of the mountain forks beneath the Middle Gate to Heaven. The route in the east was the royal way taken by emperors in the past when they came to attend sacrificial ceremonies on the mountain. It goes past a deep valley with thick forests of cypresses and pine trees. Another route in the west has been replaced by a highway. One has a wide vision riding on this route, with Heilong (Black Dragon) Pool Waterfalls by the roadside, Aolai Peak on the right, and the Fan Cliff on the left. The South Gate to Heaven can be clearly seen ahead though the road follows many twists and turns.

Daiding — The Top of the Mountain

Daiding refers to the area including the South Gate to Heaven and the 0.6-square-kilometre summit of Mount Tai above it. With considerably plain landform this area features strangely-shaped rocks and magnificent views.

For temple lovers, the Buddhist Puzhao Temple and Wangmu (Queen Mother) Pond at a Taoist monastery are worth a visit. Located at the southern slope of Mount Tai to the north of the city of Tai'an, they stand facing the city but away from its hubbub. At the Puzhao Temple a monk called Yun Hai from the Shaolin Temple in Henan Province often demonstrates martial arts for visiting pilgrims. The water from Wangmu Pond is extremely pure; even residents of Tai'an come to bring this water for brewing tea. It is said that sipping tea at the courtyard of this ancient temple can purify one's mind.

Temple Wanderings

Daimiao Temple, located in the urban district of Tai'an, occupies an area of 400 metres from north to south and 270 metres from west to east. Built in the Tang and Song architectural style, the temple with palaces and halls is enshrouded in a thick forest of age-old cypresses, gingkos and locust trees. At the temple there are too many historic sites and cultural relics for the eye to take in.

Lingyan Temple (by Peng Zhen Ge)

On the northwestern slope of the mountain is located another scenic spot — the Lingyan Temple. Standing by the Jinan-Tai'an Highway the temple is 30 kilometres from Tai'an and 40 kilometres from Jinan, capital of Shandong Province. It was one of the four famous monasteries during the Tang and Song period (618-1279). The halls and pagodas are scattered amidst looming cypresses and rosewood trees. In one of the halls, named Thousand Buddha Hall, there are 40 lifelike clay figures of arhat, vividly rendered in all human emotions. Textual researches tell that they were sculptures of the Song Dynasty and are admired by scholars as the "No. 1 Sculptures in China".

Translated by K.V. Ku

Climatic Conditions in Mount Hengshan Area

Description / Month	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Average Temperature (°C)	0.1	1.4	6.1	6.4	15.5	15.5	21.6	21.0	17.3	12.5	7.2	2.7
Average Highest Temperature (°C)	3.6	4.8	9.8	10.2	18.9	19	24.8	24.3	20.8	16.1	10.8	6.4
Average Lowest Temperature (°C)	-2.8	-1.6	2.9	3.2	12.8	12.5	19.4	18.9	15.0	10.0	4.4	-0.3
Rainfall (mm)	84.8	117.5	183.5	77.3	322.3	92.1	155.6	196.0	154.7	160.3	120.9	78.9

Mount Hengshan

— The South Mountain

PHOTO BY XIE GUANGHUI

Mount Hengshan, the South Sacred Mountain, is located 50 kilometres in Hengshan County, Hunan Province. Lying across the central and southern parts of the province it stretches 800 kilometres from Goose Returning Peak in Hengyang in the south to Mount Yuelu in Changsha in the north. Its 72 peaks stand scatteringly in eight cities and counties including Hengyang, Hengshan, Hengdong, Changsha, Xiangxiang and Xiangtan. Zhu Rong, Shilin, Tianzhu, Furong and Zigai are considered the highest peaks of the mountain. Majestic, delicate and secluded, the mountain abounds with cultural relics. The season of light snow in this area provides scenery unique to the other four sacred mountains.

Transport

First go by train to Hengyang City and change to bus direct to the foot of Mount Hengshan. There are four busses a day to this site. It takes only one hour to cover the distance of 45 kilometres. One can also go by train and get off at the Hengshan Station and change to bus to the foot of the mountain, a 18-kilometre ride. The most convenient way is to start from Hengyang and rent a car to this site, if going with companions. It will save you both time and money.

Sightseeing

There are three distinctive scenic areas with different views from the foot to the top of the mountain: the Slope Scenic Area with Nanyue Temple as its core, the Valley Scenic Area with Mojing Terrace as its centre, and the Summit Scenic Area with the South Gate to Heaven and the area above it. The first two are spectacular while the last offers a lofty and vast vision.

There are inscribed stones of all dynasties on Mount Hengshan.

A solemn hall with an eminent monk

Two days is an appropriate time for the tour to the mountain. On the first day, after arriving at the foot of the mountain from Hengyang, visit the temples of Nanyue and Zhusheng at Nanyue Town. The main entrance to the mountain is at the back of the Nanyue Temple, from where one can go up to the South Gate to Heaven either on foot or by bus. After visiting Star Viewing Terrace, walk about 20 minutes to the Stone Archway, which is carved with three Chinese characters "Nan Tian Men", meaning the South Gate to Heaven, then to Lion Rock, Shangfeng Temple and the Sunrise Watching Terrace on a slope. Nearby is a hostel for accommodation. From there a 30-minute climb brings you to the summit. One has a panoramic view of the surroundings from Zhu Rong Peak. Then visit Immortal-Meeting Bridge, Guangji Temple, Emperor Rock and so on. After that go back to the hostel near the Sunrise Watching Terrace before dusk.

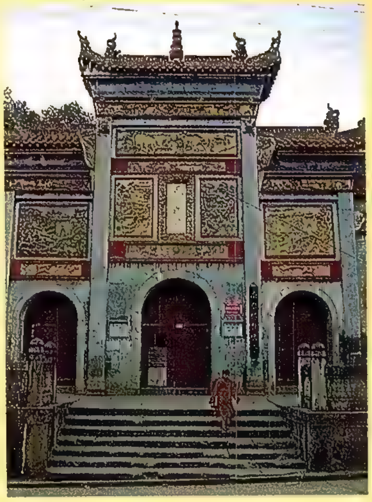
On the second day go to Sunrise Watching Terrace to watch sunrise. Then descend and visit the South Gate to Heaven on the way to the temples of Xiangnan, Azure Cloud and Iron Buddha. The next are Yehou Academy and Half Way Pavilion. The path beside Half Way Pavilion leads to Magu Fairyland. Leaving Magu Fairyland, come the Mojing Terrace, Fuyan and Nantai temples, from where retrace your way along the highway to Martyrs Shrine, and then down back to the entrance to Mount Hengshan. It takes 40 minutes. Return to Hengyang City by bus or train.

Mount Hengshan after a heavy snow

Accommodation

Many hotels such as Yancheng Guest House, Huiyan Hotel and other hostels with clean rooms, air-conditioning and other facilities are available. Nanyue Town of Hengshan has many hotels and private-owned guesthouses, which are inexpensive but substantial. You can stay at Nanyue Hotel located on Mojing Terrace on the mountain. All guesthouses have restaurants with fair prices. Or you can try other restaurants in the city for either a sumptuous feast or a frugal meal.

Zhusheng Temple at Nanyue Town



Average Climatic Conditions in Mi Xian County, Henan

Month Description	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Temperature (°C)	0.3	2.0	8.0	14.2	21.3	26.5	27.5	26.0	20.1	15.0	8.3	2.1
Rainfall (mm)	5.6	12.0	21.6	69.6	57.5	40.0	136.4	121.7	106.2	45.3	32.8	4.1

Remark: Mi Xian County is adjacent to Mount Songshan.

Mount Songshan

— The Central Mountain

Transport

Located at the hub of transport, Mount Songshan is 87 kilometres from Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province, to the northeast, and 56 kilometres from the city of Luoyang to the west. Tourist coaches for the One-day Tour of Mount Songshan are available every day from Zhengzhou, Luoyang, Kaifeng, Xuchang and other principle cities in the province. There are a dozen of tourist coaches from Dengfeng, the location of Mount Songshan, to tourist spots such as Shaolin Temple, Zhongyue Temple, Guanxing (Star Observing) Terrace and other sites.

Playing music in an environment reminiscent of the fairland (by Yu Deshui)

Accommodation

Being a tourist county, Dengfeng boasts many hotels and guesthouses. At the county seat there are Songshan Hotel and Shaolin Hotel in Zhongyue Street East; a busy commercial street has been formed near the Shaolin Temple. The guesthouse belonging to the Shaolin Martial Arts Gymnasium is also a well-equipped lodging.

Routes

It takes one day for a tour to Taishi Mountain. The best way to the mountain is to start following the East Route from Huanggai Peak at the back of Zhongyue Temple, and descend along the West Route passing Old Mother Cave.

The ruins of the city of Zuoyang, which was in existence during the period that spanned the Spring and Autumn Period and the Han Dynasty. (by Yu Deshui)

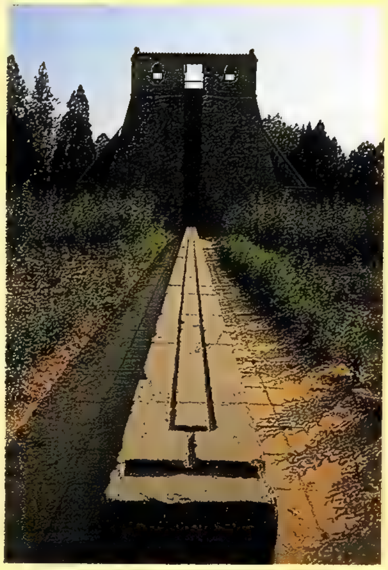
To Shaoshi Mountain it takes also one day for the trip. First ride to Lianhua (Lotus Flower) Temple, the starting point for the ascent, then go to Sanhuangzhai passing the South Gate to Heaven. From there turn to the direction to the Shaolin Temple and descend. There are no restaurants or shops on the mountain. Food and drink should be prepared before the ascent.

There are good transport services among Shaolin Temple, Songyang Academy, Songyue Temple Pagoda and Fawang Temple. All these sites can be visited within one day.

Scenic Sites

Chejing Terrace and Guanxing (Star Observation) Terrace are located 15 kilometres southeast of the county seat of Dengfeng. The former is a 3,000-year-old observatory with a 2.5-metre-high stone base and a two-metre-high stone cuboid. It was used for measuring the earth and designating the seasons. The latter, engineered by the Yuan-dynasty scientist Guo Shoujing, is 9.46 metres high with a perpendicular trough, a sundial and a dozen of other astronomical instruments. With these instruments Guo Shoujing produced the Shoushi Calendar, the most advanced in the world in his times.

Ruins of Star-Viewing Terrace (by Peng Zhen Ge)



The Han-Dynasty *Que* Pillars A kind of ancient architectural structure, *que* pillars look like an archway without a lintel, usually built in front of imperial palaces or essential temples and monasteries. In the Han Dynasty (c. 11th century-221 B.C.) there were five *que* pillars in this site. The three made of stone were called Taishi at Taishi Temple (present-day Zhongyue Temple), Shaoshi at Shaoshi Temple and Qimu at Qimu Temple. Unfortunately the last two temples have been destroyed. The three remaining *que* pillars carved with their names, dates of building and patterns of animal taming, cock fight , horse herding and wrestling are of high historical value.

The land of Mount Songshan is strewn with ruins of ancient structures (by Yu Deshui)

The Ruins of Yangcheng City The town of Gaocheng in Dengfeng County was once a county seat called Yangcheng. One of China's famous ancient cities, it was a principle settlement of the Chinese people dating back to 8,000 years ago. Cultural relics can be found on the ground and underground of this site. Essential finds in recent years include the large site of Yangcheng City of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-221 B.C.) excavated from the east bank of the Wudu River north of the town; the ruins of an ironware casting workshop belonging to the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.) from the southern city wall; and two city sites dating back to the mid and late periods of Longshan Culture some 4,000 years ago from the west bank of the Wudu River. According to textural research, this was the capital of Yu the Great in early Xia Dynasty (c. 21st-16th century B.C.) with a great number of cultural relics.

Translated by K.V. Ku

Average Climatic Conditions in Hunyuan County, Shanxi

Month Description	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Temperature (°C)	-12.4	-8.5	0.1	8.3	15.5	19.8	21.5	19.9	13.9	7.2	-1.6	-9.8
Rainfall (mm)	3.6	4.1	8.2	17.7	33.0	58.6	107.8	100.5	54.4	23.1	11.1	2.5

Remark: Hunyuan County is at the foot of Mount Hengshan.

Mount Hengshan

— The North Mountain

PHOTO & TEXT BY SHAN XIAOGANG

The exquisite white marble bridge and arch in front of the Tomb Li Yumei at the foot of Mount Hengshan

The highest Peak of Mount Hengshan is located 6 kilometres south of the county seat Hunyuan. With an altitude of 2,016 metres above sea level, it ranks first in height among the Five Sacred Mountains.

One day is enough for a tour to Mount Hengshan, except for those who plan to stay at the city of Datong. Starting from the county seat of Hunyuan or the city of Datong early in the morning, the tourist can first visit Xuankong (Suspending) Temple in Jinlong (Golden Dragon) Valley, then ride to Tingzhi (Stopping Decree) Ridge from where to climb the mountain. Horses for the ascent are available on this spot.

To the summit there are two routes with different scenes. Visitors usually take the East Route for the ascent, and the West Route for the descent. Along the East Route from the foot to the summit of the mountain scenic spots include Flying Stone Cave, Bitter and Sweet Wells, Hengzong Palace and White Dragon King Hall. Then walk westward along the ridge of the mountain to Qinqi (Zither and Chess) Terrace. On the way down the mountain one can see Huixian (Celestial-Meeting) Hall, Jiutian (Nine Heaven) Palace, Chunyang (Pure Sun) Palace and other scenic spots.

Transport

The county town Hunyuan is the starting point for the climbing. To this town there are direct buses from the following cities: Datong and Taiyuan, both in Shanxi Province, 65 and 300 kilometres respectively from Hunyuan; Shijiazhuang in Hebei Province, 297 kilometres away. Datong City, in particular, has frequent transports to the town.

Accommodation

Hengshan Guesthouse and Henglu Guesthouse located at the foot of the mountain are quite well-equipped and inexpensive. For tourists who schedule to stay at Datong, Yungang Hotel and Datong Hotel are recommended.

Scenic Sites

Beiyue Temple in Quyang Different from the other four sacred mountains which have only one mountain god temple, Mount Hengshan boasts two temples of the kind, one located at the foot of the main peak Tianfeng (Heavenly Peak), the other to the west of the county seat of Quyang in Hebei Province.

The Dragon and Phoenix Tablet and tombs lie amidst grasses at the ruins of Scarificial Hall at Beiyue Temple in Quyang.

Quyang's Beiyue (North Mountain) Temple, first built in the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534), was originally named Beiyue Heavenly King Temple. Most of the emperors of the dynasties from the Han to the Ming (206 B.C.-A.D. 1644) came to hold sacrificial ceremonies at the temple.

Larger in size and more magnificent than the one at Hunyuan, this temple features many unique architectural structures such as Yuxiang (Royal Fragrance) Pavilion, Lingxiao (Cloud Reaching) Gate, three Mountain Gate, Flying Stone Hall, Deming Halls and other tablet pavilions. The mural entitled "Heavenly Palace" in the main hall is a rarity in the history of Chinese fine arts.

Mu Guiying's Commanding Platform The reputed general Yang Ye of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1279) once stationed his troops at a strategic pass on Mount Hengshan for many years. They built forts and beacon towers, opened up mountain paths and constructed bridges. A story tells that Mu Guiying, Yang Ye's wife, was the most intelligent and courageous general of the Yang Family Army. After many of the male members of the Yangs lay down their lives for the country, she led the female members to fight the enemy and distinguished herself in many battles. It is only naturally that one finds many historical sites related to the Yang Family generals, most of which named after Mu Guiying.

The Tomb of Li Yumei Li Yumei was a native of Hunyuan County in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). It is said that he tried every means to build embankments along the river and as a result no floods occurred during his five-year tenure service as the governor of Henan Province. More than one million taels of silver had thus been saved. After his death, Emperor Daoguang bestowed him the title of "Reverence and Diligence" and a grand funeral.

Translated by K.V. Ku

Imperial Incense Pavilion in Beiyue Temple in Quyang

Climatic Conditions in Mount Huashan Area

Month Description	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Average Temperature (°C)	-6.7	-4.5	0.6	6.4	11.0	15.5	17.5	16.6	12.5	6.6	0.5	-4.4
Average Highest Temperature (°C)	-2.7	-0.5	4.6	10.2	14.7	19.0	20.7	19.8	15.8	10.0	4.2	-0.4
Average Lowest Temperature (°C)	-9.6	-7.4	-2.4	3.2	7.9	12.5	15.0	14.2	9.8	4.0	-2.3	-7.4
Rainfall (mm)	14.9	17.7	46.3	77.3	88.9	92.1	165.9	131.8	118.9	88.4	40.7	12.4

Mount Huashan

— The West Mountain

TEXT BY TIAN FU

Seasons for the Tour

Summer and autumn are the best seasons for the climbing though other seasons are also suitable. However, in winter when it snows, one should be cautious of the slippery way. Weather and scenery in spring on Mount Huashan are agreeable, but it is the busy season when the mountain path is overcrowded. There is no guarantee of safety and accommodation.

This stone statue inside the temple is believed to belong to the Eastern Han Dynasty (by Chan Yat Nin).

In summer and autumn, it is cool in the mountain and tourists are few. Moreover, the unbroken spell of wet weather is over and a sudden shower often brings out a sea of clouds.

Itineraries

There is only one path leading to the summit of the mountain, so no fear of losing one's way.

The No.1 stone tablet erected by Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty was destroyed by Huang Cao (by Shi Bao Xiu).

The stele tower still stands erect in front of the Longevity Hall (by Shi Bao Xiu).

A three-day tour is the most leisurely itinerary. It is a relaxed trip with enough time for both sightseeing and photography. The tourist can enter the mountain at the first day's noon, take a break at Qingkeping before scaling Thousand-Foot Cliff and Hundred-Foot Gorge. Arrive at the North Peak at dusk and stay the night there. The next morning go up to Old Dragon Ridge and Golden Lock Pass. Lunch at the West Peak and rest. In the afternoon, continue the ascent to the Stove for Making Pills of Immortality and the South Peak, and then to Yangtian (Facing the Sky) Pond on the summit of the mountain. After that descend to the South Peak and the South Gate to Heaven, and experience the perilous Sky Plank Way. Stay the night at the hotel on the southern slope of the East Peak.

Early morning on the third day scale the East Peak to watch sunrise. Then descend to Sparrow Hawks Turning Round and visit Chess-Playing Pavilion. Then tour the Central Peak adjacent to the East Peak at noon, and return to the same path down the mountain from the Golden Lock Pass.

For a two-day tour, enter the mountain early in the morning and stay the night on the East Peak or the Central Peak. After watching sunrise the next morning, climb the South Peak and the West Peak and then descend.

The one-day tour is the most pressing trip, usually start at midnight hurrying up the East Peak to watch sunrise. Then make a swift visit to the five peaks and return to Jade Spring Courtyard in the afternoon. This tour is only suitable for the young and the strong.

Facilities on the Mountain

Teahouses, eating stalls and stands selling food and drink and necessities for mountaineering can be found almost everywhere provided there is a piece of flat land. Litters are available at the plain sections of the mountain path and porters are ready to help visitors carry their sacks or bags at the steep sections. Hotels and guesthouses can be found at Qingkeping, Qunxian Temple, the North Peak, Golden Lock Pass, the East Peak, the South Gate to Heaven, the Stove for Making Pills of Immortality, the West Peak and Zhenyu Palace, and there are no less medium and high-grade ones at the Huashan market place near the entrance to the mountain.

Transport

To Mount Huashan by bus it takes about four hours from Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi Province, to the entrance to the mountain. By train, alight at Mengyuan (express) or Huashan (tourist/ordinary passenger train) whether from Zhengzhou, Luoyang or Sanmenxia in Henan Province in the east, or from Xi'an in the west. Then change to mini-bus or motor tricycle. The distance is a few minutes.

A new route leading to the mountain has been built recently at Huangpu Gorge on the eastern side of the mountain pass. Mini-bus and motor tricycles can ride all the way to the other side of the North Peak. From there walk along the newly carved stone steps to Tiger Mouth and other perilous sites and finally to the North Peak, where the new path links the old one.

Necessities for the Tour

Sneakers, warm clothing, walking sticks, flashlights are indispensable for the ascent. Have these necessities prepared before entering the mountain area. They can be bought or rented at the foot of the mountain.

Translated by K.V. Ku

Flights to and from Xi'an (1)

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Xi'an	1 3 6 7	07:45	09:10	CA1215
	3 6 7	11:05	12:45	WH2124
	1	12:00	13:40	WH2128
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	13:45	15:15	CA1201
	6	16:35	18:05	WH2604
	3	16:55	18:35	WH2604
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	17:10	18:45	WH2108
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	17:50	19:25	WH2102
	4 7	18:15	19:50	WH2122
	2	19:30	21:10	WH2152
Xi'an — Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	08:05	09:30	WH2101
	3 6 7	08:35	09:55	WH2123
	4 7	08:45	10:05	WH2121
	6	09:05	10:25	WH2603
	3	09:10	10:40	WH2603
	1	09:35	10:55	WH2127
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	14:40	16:05	WH2107
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	16:25	18:05	CA1202
	2	16:50	18:20	WH2151
Datong — Xi'an	1	11:00	13:10	AG104
	6	16:00	17:25	WH2608
Xi'an — Datong	1	07:55	10:10	AG103
	6	08:45	10:00	W H2607
Guangzhou —Xi'an	2 3 4 6	11:10	13:15	WH2306
	5 7	11:45	13:45	WH2306
	1	12:55	15:05	WH2306
	1 3 5 7	14:50	16:55	CZ3201
	3	16:30	18:55	WH2366
	2	16:40	18:50	WH2324
	1	18:50	20:55	WH2368
	3 6	18:50	21:00	WH2322
	1 2 4 5 6 7	19:40	21:45	WH2304
	3	20:05	22:20	WH2330
Xi'an — Guangzhou	2 4 6	08:00	10:05	WH2305
	3	08:00	10:10	WH2305
	2	08:30	10:35	WH2323
	1 2 4 5 6 7	08:40	10:50	WH2303
	5	08:50	10:40	WH2305
	3 6	08:50	11:00	WH2321
	3	09:00	11:15	WH2329
	7	09:05	10:45	WH2305
	1	09:10	11:25	WH2367
	1	09:40	11:50	WH2305
	3	13:00	15:25	WH2365
	1 3 5 7	17:55	20:20	CZ3202
Hongkong — Xi'an	2 4 6 7	18:00	20:20	CZ322
Xi'an — Hongkong	2 4 6 7	14:30	17:00	CZ321
Nagoya — Xi'an	2 4 5 7	15:30	16:25	WH292
	1 3 6	18:25	19:45	MU530
Xi'an — Nagoya	2 4 5 7	08:20	14:15	WH291
Qingdao — Xi'an	3	10:50	13:00	WH2536
	7	13:40	15:40	WH2574
	5	16:05	18:30	WH2544
Xi'an — Qingdao	5	07:35	09:50	WH2543
	3	07:40	09:50	WH2535
	7	10:40	12:40	WH2573
Shanghai — Xi'an	1 4	12:05	14:00	WH2522
	2 6	13:05	14:55	SF203
	1 5	17:05	19:10	WH2510
	2 6	17:45	19:45	WH2504
	5	17:55	19:55	WH292
	2 4 7	18:05	20:05	WH292
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	19:05	21:05	WH2502
Xi'an — Shanghai	2 6	08:10	09:45	WH2503
	2 4 7	08:20	10:00	WH291
	5	08:20	10:05	WH291
	1 4	09:20	11:00	WH2521
	1 5	09:30	11:10	WH2509
	1 3 6 7	10:00	11:40	CA1567
	2 6	15:50	17:45	SF204
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	16:15	17:55	WH2501

Flights to and from Xi'an (2)

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Shenzhen — Xi'an	1 2 5 7	11:35	13:55	WH2326
	4	11:35	13:55	WH2354
	3 7	16:20	18:40	CZ3251
Xi'an — Shenzhen	1 2 5 7	07:50	10:10	WH2325
	4	07:50	10:10	WH2353
	3 7	19:35	21:45	CZ3252
Taiyuan —Xi'an	3	08:20	09:45	GP7403
	5	08:50	10:20	GP7411
Xi'an — Taiyaun	3	16:05	17:25	GP7412
	5	16:05	17:55	GP7404
Tianjin —Xi'an	1 4	07:25	08:50	CA1421
Xi'an — Tiangjin	1 4	14:10	15:40	CA1422
Yantai —Xi'an	3 7	16:30	17:45	SZ4532
	4	18:40	21:00	WH2552
Xi'an — Yantai	4	08:15	10:40	WH2551
	1 4	13:55	15:15	SZ4531
Zhengzhou — Xi'an	4 7	16:30	17:55	Z2 325
Xi'an — Zhengzhou	4 7	18:55	20:30	Z2 326

(Valid to March 25, 1995)

Flights to and from Jinan

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Jinan	3 6	08:10	09:10	X2101
	2 6	10:00	10:50	MU5152
	2	10:10	11:05	MU5154
	1 4	20:30	21:05	MU5118
Jinan — Beijing	1 2 4 6	08:00	08:50	MU5117
	2	08:25	09:15	MU5153
	3 6	17:10	18:10	X2102
Guangzhou — Jinan	4	10:20	12:30	3U591
	1 3 5 7	12:05	14:25	MU5328
	2 6	13:05	15:50	3U392
	1 2 4 7	15:00	17:15	CZ3509
Jinan —Guangzhou	2 6	10:20	12:30	3U391
	4	13:30	15:40	3U592
	1 3 5 7	15:25	17:45	MU5327
	1 2 4 7	18:15	20:35	CZ3510
Qingdao — Jinan	6	07:50	08:25	MU5965
Jinan — Qingdao	6	15:10	15:50	MU5966
Shanghai — Jinan	1 5	08:15	09:30	SF557
	3 7	10:05	11:15	SZ4589
	2 3 5 7	18:25	19:40	MU5578
Jinan — Shanghai	1 5	11:00	12:10	SF558
	7	12:15	13:25	SZ4590
	3	12:20	13:30	SZ4590
	2 3 5 7	16:10	17:30	MU5577
Shenzhen — Jinan	2 4 5	08:10	10:55	4G837
	3	08:55	11:10	CZ3561
	6	14:30	16:50	CZ3569
	6	15:30	18:00	MU5366
Jinan — Shenzhen	6	11:55	14:25	MU5365
	3	12:05	14:35	CZ3562
	6	17:40	20:00	CZ3570
	2 4 5	18:00	20:30	4G838
Xi'an — Jinan	3 7	16:40	18:00	XO9510
Jinan — Xi'an	3 7	14:20	15:30	XO9509

(Valid to March 25, 1995)

Flights to and from Changsha (1)

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Changsha	3 4 5 7	10:50	12:50	CZ3124
	1	11:00	13:00	CZ3124
	4 7	11:15	13:20	WH2133
	2	11:40	13:40	CZ3142
	6	11:55	13:55	CZ3142
	6	13:15	15:15	CZ3148
	5	14:30	16:30	CZ3146
	3 6	15:05	16:55	SZ4734
	1 3 5 7	16:10	18:00	CA1343
Changsha — Beijing	1 3 4 5 7	07:45	09:45	CZ3123
	2 6	08:45	10:45	CZ3141
	6	10:15	12:15	CZ3147
	5	11:25	13:25	CZ3145
	7	12:00	13:50	SZ4149
	2	12:05	14:05	CZ3161
	3 6	12:15	14:05	SZ4733
	4	12:20	14:20	CZ3161
	4 7	14:50	17:00	WH2134
	1 3 5 7	18:50	20:45	CA1344
Guangzhou — Changsha	2 3 4 5 7	10:00	11:00	CZ3376
	1 6	14:20	16:10	CZ3762
	1 6	14:30	15:25	CZ3374
	2	18:00	18:55	SZ4772
	5	19:50	20:50	CZ3792
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	20:40	21:30	CZ3388
	1	21:15	22:05	CZ3792
Changsha — Guangzhou	1 6	07:50	08:40	CZ3373
	2 3 4 5 7	08:00	09:00	CZ3375
	1 6	11:45	13:40	CZ3761
	2	16:00	16:55	SZ4771
	5	17:55	18:55	CZ3791
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	18:15	19:15	CZ3387
	1	19:25	20:25	CZ3791
Qingdao — Changsha	1	10:40	12:40	CZ3582
	5	13:50	15:50	SZ4774
	3	17:40	19:30	SZ4560
Changsha — Qingdao	1	07:40	09:40	CZ3581
	5	10:50	12:50	SZ4773
	3	15:00	16:50	SZ4559
Shanghai — Changsha	4 7	09:15	10:35	SF585
	2 3	13:55	15:25	CZ3868
	1 5 7	14:25	15:50	CZ3870
	1 3 4 5 6	17:10	18:25	MU5301
	4	17:35	18:50	CZ3870
Changsha — Shanghai	4 7	11:35	12:45	SF586
	2 3	11:35	13:00	CZ3867
	1 5 7	12:10	13:30	CZ3869
	4	15:15	16:30	CZ3869
	1 3 4 5 6	19:20	20:40	MU5302
Shenzhen —Changsha	2 5	08:30	09:40	4G827
	1 5	13:55	15:15	WH2302
	2 5	14:35	15:40	CZ3987
	1 5	15:10	16:00	CJ6372
	3 7	15:40	16:50	CZ3390
	4 6	17:25	18:25	XO9304
Changsha — Shenzhen	2 5	10:30	11:40	4G828
	1 5	11:40	12:50	WH2301
	1 5	12:50	13:50	CJ6371
	3 7	13:30	14:45	CZ3389
	4 6	15:05	16:05	XO9303
	2 5	16:40	17:50	CZ3988

Flights to and from Changsha (2)

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Taiyuan — Changsha	4	08:00	09:50	GP7359
	1	08:00	09:50	GP7363
Changsha — Taiyuan	4	16:30	18:20	GP7360
	1	17:30	19:20	GP7364
Xi'an — Changsha	5	08:10	09:45	WH2335
	7	08:10	09:50	WH2385
	2	13:00	14:30	XO9381
Changsha — Xi'an	2	15:30	17:00	XO9382
	7	15:50	17:30	WH2386
	5	16:25	18:10	WH2336
Zhengzhou —Changsha	3 5	14:00	16:10	Z2 303
Changsha — Zhengzhou	3 5	17:00	19:10	Z2 304
Guangzhou — Hengyang	1 5	12:35	13:45	CZ3733
Hengyang — Guangzhou	1 5	14:15	15:25	CZ3734

(Valid to March 25, 1995)

Flights to and from Zhengzhou

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Zhengzhou	7	10:00	11:00	CZ3116
	1 4	10:10	11:10	Z2 312
	3	19:35	20:35	CZ3172
	1 4	20:40	21:40	CZ3176
Zhengzhou — Beijing	7	08:05	08:55	CZ3115
	1 4	08:10	09:10	Z2 311
	3	13:20	14:20	CZ3171
	1 4	18:35	19:35	CZ3175
Guangzhou — Zhengzhou	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	11:05	12:40	CZ3392
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	16:40	18:30	CZ3394
	7	17:00	18:50	Z2 332
	2 4	17:05	19:00	Z2 332
	5	17:20	19:10	Z2 340
Zhengzhou — Guangzhou	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	08:00	09:50	CZ3391
	5	08:20	10:10	Z2 339
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	13:55	15:45	CZ3393
	7	14:00	15:50	Z2 331
	2 4	14:10	16:00	Z2 331
Qingdao —Zhengzhou	4 7	12:20	14:10	Z2 358
	4	17:05	18:05	XO9514
Zhengzhou — Qingdao	4 7	09:40	11:30	Z2 357
	4	14:45	15:55	XO9513
Shanghai — Zhengzhou	2 4 6	14:30	15:50	CZ3594
	1 4	15:00	16:30	Z2 356
Zhengzhou — Shanghai	2 4 6	12:20	13:30	CZ3593
	1 4	12:30	13:55	Z2 355
Shenzhen — Zhengzhou	2 3 5 7	11:50	13:50	CZ3965
	2 5	12:50	14:30	4G807
	4	14:50	17:00	CZ3981
	1 4	18:00	20:00	Z2 338
Zhengzhou — Shenzhen	1 4	14:30	16:30	Z2 337
	2 5	15:20	17:20	4G808
	4	18:00	20:00	CZ3982
	2 3 5 7	20:50	22:50	CZ3966
Tianjin — Zhengzhou	1 4	11:20	14:10	CJ6345
Zhengzhou — Tianjin	1 4	14:55	16:35	CJ6346
Guangzhou — Luoyang	2 3 4 7	10:10	12:10	CZ3363
	5	11:20	13:20	Z2 383
Luoyang — Guangzhou	2 3 4 7	13:30	15:30	CZ3364
	5	14:15	16:10	Z2 384
Shanghai — Luoyang	7	12:25	14:10	WH2583
Luoyang — Shanghai	7	15:10	16:40	WH2584
Shenzhen — Luoyang	3	19:00	21:00	CZ3959
Luoyang — Shenzhen	4	15:35	17:35	CZ3960

(Valid to March 25, 1995)

Flights to and from Taiyuan

Route	Days of Week	Dep.	Arr.	Flight No.
Beijing — Taiyuan	2	14:10	15:00	CA1711
	7	20:25	21:25	GP7102
	2 4	20:25	21:25	GP7104
	1 3 6	22:05	23:00	GP7106
	5	22:05	23:00	GP7108
Taiyuan — Beijing	7	07:10	08:10	GP7101
	1 3 6	07:25	08:30	GP7105
	2 4	07:35	08:35	GP7103
	5	09:10	10:05	GP7107
	2	22:40	23:20	CA1712
Guangzhou —Taiyuan	2 4 6 7	08:45	11:05	CZ3701
	3 6	12:00	14:10	WH2372
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	16:55	19:40	GP7304
Taiyuan — Guangzhou	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	07:15	09:55	GP7303
	2 4 6 7	12:05	14:20	CZ3702
	3 6	15:10	17:40	WH2371
Shanghai — Taiyuan	7	10:35	12:35	GP7569
	2	10:55	12:50	GP7502
	1 5	12:10	13:55	WH2572
	6	16:20	18:25	GP7514
Taiyuan — Shanghai	2	07:40	09:40	GP7501
	6	07:40	09:40	GP7513
	7	13:30	15:30	GP7570
	1 5	14:50	16:10	WH2571
Shenzhen — Taiyuan	1 4	17:30	20:20	GP7308
Taiyuan — Shenzhen	1 4	08:20	11:15	GP7307
Tianjin — Taiyuan	1 4	15:35	16:55	GP7602
Taiyuan — Tianjin	1 4	08:25	09:40	GP7601
Zhengzhou — Taiyuan	7	19:35	20:40	GP7302
Taiyuan — Zhengzhou	7	08:20	09:20	GP7301

(Valid to March 25, 1995)

Train Schedules
Shanghai — Hangzhou — Guangzhou

209 F.T.	49 Exp.	Train No. Station	50 Exp.	210 F.T.
	10:00	Shanghai	20:30	
09:20	—	Hangzhou	—	20:21
—	13:16	Hangzhou East	17:28	—
13:30	16:36	Jinhua	14:07	15:35
20:55	22:12	Yingtan	08:07	08:33
23:11	00:10	Xiangtang West	06:05	05:30
04:55	04:31	Pingxiang	01:34	00:11
07:14	06:20	Zhuzhou	23:49	22:16
09:32	08:25	Hengyang	21:40	19:55
15:10	13:36	Shaoguan	16:29	14:20
18:55	16:46	Guangzhou	13:06	10:20

Exp. — Express

F.T. — Fast through passenger train

Train Schedules
Beijing — Zhengzhou — Wuchang — Guangzhou

257 F.T.	253 F.T.	251 F.T.	245 F.T.	243 F.T.	37 Exp.	29 Exp.	15 Exp.	1 Exp.	Train No. Station	2 Exp.	16 Exp.	30 Exp.	38 Exp.	244 F.T.	246 F.T.	352 F.T.	254 F.T.	258 F.T.
		23:55	12:59		18:14	22:30	00:30	09:01	Beijing	20:22	04:30	06:00	13:21		04:00	06:45		
	11:44	—	—		—	—	—	—	Beijing South	—	—	—	—		—	—	03:20	
	16:04	04:54	17:41		21:54	01:57	03:57	12:28	Shijiazhuang	17:02	01:14	02:44	09:48		00:04	02:09	23:18	
	19:23	08:00	21:01		00:41	—	—	15:27	Anyang	14:02	—	—	07:00		20:45	22:50	19:48	
20:54	22:04	10:49	23:59	14:35	03:14	06:56	08:56	18:11	Zhengzhou	11:17	20:10	21:40	04:28	05:17	17:58	19:34	16:40	08:38
02:08			04:32	19:09	07:16	10:53	12:53	22:13	Xinyang	07:09	16:10	17:40	00:24	00:48	13:03			03:38
05:43			07:53	22:47	10:31	—	—	01:26	Hankou	03:48	—	—	21:03	20:48	09:03			23:56
06:24			08:16	23:22	10:54	14:21	16:21	02:01	Wuchang	03:09	12:29	13:59	20:23	19:51	08:53			23:12
10:30				03:14		—	19:33	05:15	Yueyang	23:58	09:19	—		16:03				19:29
12:50				05:45		19:27	21:41	07:13	Changsha	21:50	07:15	08:59		13:45				17:05
				09:00		22:21	00:35		Hengyang		04:19	06:03		10:20				
				14:36		03:20	05:36		Shaoguan		23:21	01:07		04:40				
				18:15		06:29	08:45		Guangzhou		20:00	21:46		00:43				

Train Schedules
Beijing — Jinan — Nanjing — Shanghai

119 F.T.	123 F.T.	161 F.T.	21 Exp.	13 Exp.	Train No. Station	14 Exp.	22 Exp.	162 F.T.	124 F.T.	120 F.T.
17:14	09:00 (From Tianjin)	20:58	21:55	14:40	Beijing	09:03 (Next day)	12:56 (Next day)	16:20	07:22 (To Tianjin)	11:44
19:31	09:28	23:16	23:41	16:27	Tianjin West	07:25	11:18	14:10	06:59	09:52
22:54	13:12	02:56	—	—	Dezhou	—	—	10:49	03:47	06:20
01:04	15:21	05:05	03:44	20:29	Jinan South	03:30	07:23	08:42	01:30	04:21
02:09	16:28	06:12	—	—	Tai'an	—	—	07:32	00:17	03:12
03:23	17:43	07:27	—	—	Yanzhou	—	—	06:14	22:59	01:56
06:04	20:34	10:14	—	—	Xuzhou	—	—	03:41	20:46	23:25
08:48	23:18	12:51	09:40	02:28	Bengbu	21:22	01:15	00:35	18:08	20:40
12:27	02:34	15:53	—	—	Nanjing	—	—	21:49	15:15	17:45
13:25	03:32	16:50	—	—	Zhenjiang	—	—	20:39	14:00	16:36
15:11	05:26	18:42	—	—	Wuxi	—	—	18:54	12:20	14:55
15:50	06:18	19:22	—	—	Suzhou	—	—	18:15	11:40	14:16
17:05	—	—	—	—	Shanghai West	—	—	—	—	13:01
20:20 (To Hangzhou)	07:31	20:39	15:27 (Next day)	08:12 (Next day)	Shanghai	15:46	19:49	16:49	10:25	09:25 (From Hangzhou)

Major Hotels in Shandong, Hunan, Shaanxi, Shanxi and Henan Provinces

Jinan, Shandong

Jinan Hotel
濟南飯店
240 Jingsan Road, Jinan, Shandong 250021
Tel: (0531) 7938981, 7938985   Telex: 39106 TSHJN CN
Fax: (0531) 732906
GM: Zhang Shangying
Opened 1958
73 rooms
Located in the heart of downtown, 6 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, banquet rooms, billiard room, bar, function room, shopping arcade, beauty salon

Qilu Hotel
齊魯賓館

8 Qianfoshan Road, Jinan, Shandong 250014
Tel: (0531) 2966888   Telex: 39142 QLHJN CN
Fax: (0531) 613524
GM: Wang Zhixian
Opened 15 April 1986
246 rooms and suites
Located at the foot of Qianfo Mountain south of the city, 15 km from airport, 7 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference rooms, bar, ballroom, tennis court, karaoke, disco, gym, billiard room, sauna, massage

Shungeng Hillview Hotel
舜耕山莊
1 Shungeng Road, Jinan, Shandong 250014
Tel: 6915901   Telex: 39184 MTCJN CN
Fax: (0531) 615288
GM: Zou Benzi
Opened August 1985
130 rooms
Located 9.7 km from city centre, 30 min from airport, 15 min from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, conference room, function hall, shopping arcade, billiard room, gym, beauty salon, clinic

Qingdao, Shandong

Badaguan Hotel Qingdao
八大關賓館
19 Shanhaiguan Road, Qingdao, Shangdong 266071
Tel: 3872168   Telex: 32224 BDGHL CN
Fax: (0532) 371383
GM: Zheng Huai
Opened 3 June 1949
260 rooms
Located in city centre, 32 km from airport, 6 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Japanese restaurants, banquet room, business centre, souvenir shop, bar, indoor swimming pool, sauna, function hall, beauty salon, dance hall, karaoke, shopping arcade, tennis court, billiard room

Dongfang Hotel
東方飯店
4 Daxue Road, Qingdao, Shandong 266003
Tel: 2865888   Telex: 321221 DFHQD CN
Fax: 262741
GM: Qu Ruci
Opened 26 December 1989
132 rooms and suites
Located 33 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, business centre, coffee shop, beauty salon, dance hall, shopping arcade

Haitian Hotel
海天大酒店

39 Zhanshan Avenue, Qingdao, Shandong 266071
Tel: 3871888, 3866415   Telex: 321014 QDHTH CN
Fax: 371152, 371777
GM: Xin Keting
Opened 28 October 1988
700 rooms and suites
Facilities: Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Western restaurants, 500-seat banquet room, 800-seat conference hall, business centre, karaoke, disco, indoor swimming pool, sauna, gym, tennis court, billiard room, AMF bowling centre

Huanghai Hotel
黃海飯店
75 First Yan'an Road, Qingdao, Shandong 266003
Tel: (0532) 2870215   Telex: 32151 BOOTH CN
Fax: (0532) 279795
GM: Zhai Shende
Opened 18 May 1983
350 rooms
Located in centre city, 35 km from airport, 4 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Japanese restaurants, conference halls and rooms, multi-function hall, business centre, dance hall, karaoke, billiard room, gym, shopping arcade, beauty salon, clinic

Huiquan Dynasty Hotel
匯泉王朝大酒店
9 Nanhai Road, Qingdao, Shandong 266003
Tel: 2879279   Telex: 32178 HQDTY CN
Fax: 279220
GM: Werner Katte
Opened 3 August 1986
500 rooms
Located near Badaguan Scenic Area and commercial centre with a picturesque view of Huiquan Bay, 35 km from airport, 5 km from railway station
Facilities: Revolving restaurant, business centre, tennis courts, bowling, indoor swimming pool, gym, sauna

Qingdao Guest House
青島迎賓館
26 Longshan Road, Qingdao, Shandong 266003
Tel: (0532) 2866120, 2865465
Telex: 32180 YBGQD CN
Fax: (0532) 261985
GM: Fu Tian
Opened 1903

10 suites
Located in the heart of city, 28 km from airport, 2.5 km from railway station
Facilities: Business centre, meeting room, shopping arcade, karaoke, dance hall, billiard room

Qingdao Ocean Hotel
青島遠洋賓館
61 Zhanliugan Road, Qingdao, Shandong 266071
Tel: 5815188   Telex: 32237 COSQD CN
Fax: (0532) 515198
GM: Dong Qingbo
100 rooms and suites
Located 30 km from airport, 8 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, banquet room, meeting rooms, billiard room, karaoke, ballroom, shopping arcade, beauty salon

Changsha, Hunan

Hua Tian Great Hotel
華天大酒店
16 Jiefang Road East, Changsha, Hunan 410001
Tel: 442888   Telex: 982021 HTDJD CN
Fax: 0713-442270
GM: Zhu Fang Di
Opened 8 May 1988
311 rooms and 10 suites
Located in the city centre, 30 km from airport, 1 km from railway station
Facilities: 18 Chinese and Western restaurants, 14 meeting rooms, business centre, coffee shop, bar, discotheque, music hall, billiard room, indoor swimming pool, sauna, shopping arcade, beauty salon, massage, health club

Lotus Hotel
芙蓉賓館
9 Wuyi Road East, Changsha, Hunan 410001
Tel: 401888   Telex: 98132 HNLH CN
Fax: 445175
GM: Xiao Zhengxiong
275 rooms and suites
Located in the heart of the city
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, 300-seat banquet hall, coffee shop, shopping arcade, bar, beauty salon, massage

Qingyuan Hotel (No. 1 Building)
青園賓館（1棟）
2 Qingyuan Road, Changsha, Hunan 410004
Tel: 34816   Fax: 442579
GM: Li Yingchang
Facilities: Restaurant with Hunan dishes, meeting roon

Rongyuan Hotel
蓉園賓館
1 Furong Road, Changsha, Hunan 410011
Tel: 267194 Fax: 443668
GM: Zhang Deqiu
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conferenc rooms

Xiangjiang Hotel
湘江賓館
2 Zhongshan Road, Changsha, Hunan 410005
Tel: 446888, 408888 Telex: 98131 XIANG CN
Fax: 0731-448285
GM: Fei Xiangyao
Opened July 1988
300 rooms and suites
Located in the heart of the city, 40 minutes from airport, 5 minutes from railway station

Facilities: 14 restaurants offering Hunan and Western dishes, coffee shop, bar, shopping arcade, discotheque, beauty salon, massage

Zhuzhou, Hunan

Qingyun Hotel
慶雲賓館

Chezhan Road, Zhuzhou, Hunan 412008
Tel: 24851, 22951 Telex: 995011 QYCZH CN
Fax: 0733-25336
GM: Xie Yixi
Opened 25 December 1987
300 rooms and suites
Located opposite the railway station, 70 km from airport
Facilities: 4 restaurants (800 seats), business centre, coffee shop, beauty salon, karaoke, gym

Hengyang, Hunan

Yancheng Guest House
雁城賓館
Jiefang Road, Hengyang, Hunan 421001

Huiyan Hotel
回雁賓館
26 Guangdong Road, Hengyang, Hunan
Located near railway station
Facilities: Chinese restaurant, souvenir shop

Yueyang, Hunan

Yueyang International Building
岳陽國際大廈

Nanhu Avenue, Yueyang, Hunan 414000
Tel: 224811 Telex: 994015 ZBYCS CN
Fax: 223637
GM: Liao Hong'an
Opened 24 January 1988
284 rooms and suites
Located 120 km from airport, 1 km from railway station
Facilities: Shopping arcade, dance hall, karaoke, beauty salon, clinic

Xi'an, Shaanxi

Bell Tower Hotel
鐘樓飯店
Southwest of Bell Tower, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001
Tel: 7279200 Telex: 70124 XABTH CN/ 70195 BTH CN
Fax: (029)/18970/718767
305 rooms and 16 suites
Located 5 km from airport and railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference room, business centre, bar, coffee shop, disco, gym, shopping centre, facilities for handicapped persons, babysitting service

China Merchants Hotel
華商酒店
131 Heping Road, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001
Tel: 7218988
GM: Victor Yang
Opened 1 March 1990
150 rooms and suites
Located in city centre, 49 km from airport, 1 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, coffee shop, music hall, disco, karaoke, massage

City Hotel
城市酒店
5 Nanda Street, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710002
Tel: 7219988
Fax: 7216688
GM: Chen Kangyi
Opened 22 June 1988
143 rooms and suites
Located 45 km from airport, 15 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, bar, business centre, coffee shop, karaoke-dance hall, massage, beauty salon, shopping arcade

Concord Hotel
協和大酒店
28 Fenghao Road East, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710077
Tel: 742811 Telex: 70024 CHNHL CN
Fax: 742814
161 rooms and 6 suites
Located 10 km from city centre, 2 km from airport, 15 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference room, business centre, bar, ballroom, disco, karaoke, beauty salon, clinic, billiard room, tennnis courts, massage, shopping centre, babysitting service, facilities for handicapped persons

Dynasty Hotel
秦都酒店
55 Huancheng Road North, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710082
Tel: (86-29) 7212718 Telex: 700233 DHX CN
Fax: (86-29) 72112728
GM: Steven Tan
Opened 12 July 1990
200 rooms and 34 suites
Located 45 km from airport, 8 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese, Western and Korean restaurants, banquet hall, busines centre, bar, gym, massage, sauna, beauty salon, karoke, disco, shopping arcade

Hyatt Regency Xi'an
凱悅（阿房宮）飯店

158 Dongba Street, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710001
Tel: 7231234 Telex: 70048 AFPH CN
Fax: 7216799
GM: Paul Hugentobler
Opened July 1990
349 rooms
Located 43 km from airport, 2 km from railway sation
Facilities: Restaurants, bar, gym, whirlpool, sauna, steambath, massage, beauty salon, shopping arcade

Jianguo Hotel
建國飯店

20 Jinhua Road South, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000
Tel: (86) 29-338888
Fax: (86) 29-335145
Opened 12 March 1989
710 rooms and suites
Located near the Xingqing Park, Xi'an Zoo and the Banpo Museum, 12 km/25 min from airport, 7 km/10 min from raiway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, business centre, bar, coffee shop, ballroom, beauty salon, indoor swimming pool, bicycle rental and the biggest tourism shopping mall in Xi'an

J Z Regency Hotel Xi'an
君爵國際酒店
15 Changle Middle Road, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032
Tel/Fax: (29) 332-009
Opened 1992
293 rooms and 104 suites
Located 40 km from airport
Facilities: Chinese, Japanese, Korean barbecue restaurants, banquet rooms, business centre, commercial centre, shopping arcade, tennis courts, outdoor golf course, beauty salon, karaoke, nightclub

New World Hotel
古都大酒店
48 Lianhu Road, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710002
Tel: 7216868 Telex: 70156 XDHTL CN
Fax: 7219754
501 rooms
Located 4 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference room, business centre, bar, disco, theatre, shopping arcade, karaoke, gym, tennis courts, swimming pool, billiard room, sauna, massage, babysitting service, facilities for handicapped persons

Shangri-La Garden Flower
香格里拉金花飯店
8 Changle Road West, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032
Tel: (86-29) 3232981 Telex: 70155 SLX CN
Fax: (86-29) 3235477, 3235185
GM: Brian Leong
Opened 1 April 1985
435 rooms and 47 suites
Located 45 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Facilities: Restaurants, business centre, bar, coffee shop, disco, karaoke, indoor swimming pool, gym, sauna, massage, beauty salon, clinic, babysitting service

Tang Cheng Hotel
唐城賓館
3 Lingyuan Road South, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710061
Tel: 7211164 Telex: 70013 TCH CN
Fax: (029) 7211041
Opened 1987
395 rooms and 11 suites
Located 7 km from city centre and airport, 10 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference room, business centre, exhibition hall, bar, coffee shop, shopping arcade, ballroom, disco, karaoke, clinic, beauty salon, billiard room, massage, babysitting service.

Wan Nian Hotel
萬年飯店
11 Changle Road Central, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710032
Tel: 3231932, 3232523 Telex: 70033 XWNG CN
Fax: 3235460

162 rooms and 4 suites
Located 6 km from the city centre, 12 km from airport, 5 km from raiway station
Facilities: Chinese restaurant, bar, coffee shop, disco, shopping arcade, babysitting service

Xi'an Empress Hotel
西安皇后大酒店
45 Xingqing Road, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710084
Tel: 3232999
Fax: 3236988
Opened 1993
259 rooms and suites
Facilities: Chinese, Western, Japanese and Korean restaurants, business centre, shopping arcade, coffee shop, disco, billiard room, bowling

Xi'an Garden Hotel - Tang Hua
唐華賓館

4 Yanyin Road, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000
Tel: (029) 5261111 Telex: 70027 GAHTL CN
Fax: (029) 561988
GM: Kenichi Takashi
301 rooms and suites
Located 48 km from airport, 6 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese, Western and Japanese restaurants, banquet rooms, conference rooms, bar, shopping arcade, disco, sauna, beauty salon, clinic

Xi'an Lee Gardens Hotel
西安利園酒店
8 Laodong Road South, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710000
Tel: (29) 7243388
Opened August 1992
296 rooms and 10 suites
Located in the southwestern part of the city
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, business centre, bar, disco, coffee shop

Taiyuan, Shanxi

Bingzhou Hotel
并州飯店

32 Yingze Avenue, Taiyuan, Shanxi 030001
Tel: (0351) 442111 Telex: 28125 TYBZH CN
Fax: (0351) 433540
GM: Liu Zonggui
Opened 1957
326 rooms
Located 15 km from airport, 1 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, banquet hall, conference room, business centre, karaoke, dance hall, gym, coffee shop, bar, beauty salon, sauna

Jinci Guesthouse
晉祠賓館
Jinci Town, southern suburbs, Taiyuan, Shanxi 03001
Tel: 640063

Sanqiao Mansion
三橋大廈
4 Hanxiguan, Taiyuan, Shanxi 030002
Tel: 345885

Shanxi Grand Hotel
山西大酒店
5 Xinjian Road South, Taiyuan, Shanxi 030001
Tel: 443901 Telex: 282037 SGHTL CN
Fax: (0351) 443525
166 rooms and suites
Located 13 km from airport, 1.5 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, conference room, business centre, ballroom, bar, coffee shop, disco, shopping arcade, beauty salon, swimming pool, gym, bowling, sauna, massage, billiard room

Shanxi Sports Guesthouse
山西體育賓館
9 Tiyu Road, Dayingpan, Taiyuan, Shanxi 030000
Tel: 772357

Yingze Guesthouse
迎澤賓館
51 Yingze Avenue, Taiyuan, Shanxi 030025
Tel: 443211, 442941

Zhengzhou, Henan

Dukang Hotel
杜康大酒店
178 Tongbai Road, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 776888
Located 8 km from airport, 3.5 km from railway station

Haitian Hotel
海天大酒店
288 Chengdong Road, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 559988
Located 30 km from airport, 5 km from railway station

Huanghe Hotel
黃河飯店
106 Zhongyuan Road, Zhengzhou, Henan 450052
Tel: 771005 Telex: 46020
Fax: 772235
261 rooms and suites
Located 7 km from airport, 2 km from railway station
Facilities: Restaurant, bar, coffee shop, disco, beauty salon

International Hotel Henan
河南國際飯店
114 Jinshui Avenue, Zhengzhou, Henan 450003
Tel: 556600, 550161 Telex: 46061 HNZIN CN
Fax: (0371) 551526
GM: Zhao Zhengyi
Opened October 1981
250 rooms and suites
Located 3 km from airport, 5 km from railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, banquet hall, business centre, conference centre, clinic, shopping arcade, coffee shop, disco, gym, sauna, massage, billiard room

Regent Mansion
麗晶大廈
Jinshui Road, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 356600
Located 2 km from airport, 5 km from raiway station

Tianyuan Hotel
田園酒店
Yima Road, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 669898
Located 6 km from airport, 500 m from railway station

Zhengzhou Asia Hotel
鄭州亞細亞大酒店
Erqi Square, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 668866
Located 3.5 km from airport, 1 km from railway station

Zhengzhou Grand Hotel
鄭州格林蘭大酒店
93 Datong Road, Zhengzhou, Henan
Tel: 668888
Located 6 km from airport, next to the railway station

Luoyang, Henan

Dongfang Hotel
東方賓館
182 Jianshe Road, Luoyang, Henan 471000
Tel: 221691
Located 20 km from airport, 8 km from railway station

Friendship Guesthouse
友誼賓館
6 Xiyuan Road, Luoyang, Henan 471003
Tel: 412780
Located 19 km from airport, 7 km from railway station

Garden Hotel
花園大酒店
Nanchang Road, Luoyang, Henan 471000
Tel: 221681
Located 20 km from airport, 8 km from railway station

Luokuang Hotel
洛礦賓館
Chongqing Road, Luoyang, Henan 471003
Tel: 335391
Located 16 km from airport, 5 km from railway station

Luoyang Guesthouse
洛陽市迎賓館
6 Renmin Road West, Luoyang, Henan
Tel: 335414
Located 23 km from airport, 10 km from railway station

Mudan Hotel
牡丹大酒店
15 Zhongzhou Road West, Luoyang, Henan
Tel: 413669
Located 17 km from airport, 6 km from railway station

Kaifeng, Henan

Dongjing Hotel
東京大飯店
14 Yingbin Road, Kaifeng, Henan 475000
Tel: 555544
Located near the airport, 2 km from railway station

Dongyuan Hotel
東苑大酒店
Xinsong Road, Kaifeng, Henan
Located 1 km from railway station

Kaifeng Hotel
開封賓館

64 Ziyou Road Central, Kaifeng, Henan 475000
Tel: (0378) 555589
GM: Zhang Jianhua
Opened 1953
188 romms
Located 60 km from airport, 3 km from railway station
Facilities: Karaoke, dancing hall, coffee shop,bar

Dengfeng County, Henan

Songshan Hotel
嵩山賓館
117 Zhongyue Avenue, Dengfeng, Henan 452470
Tel: 72755, 73744
GM: Liu Junfeng
Opened 1979
64 rooms and suites
Located near the airport and railway station
Facilities: Chinese and Western restaurants, ballroom, big and small conference rooms, bar, karaoke

N E W S

TOURIST INFORMATION

New Scenic Spots

A dozen new scenic spots are being developed near the Three Gorges area in Hubei Province, to replace the famous traditional sites due to disappear in the next few years when a huge dam is constructed.

The new sites, located along many tributaries of the Yangtze River, will be available to tourists when water rises to make shipping possible, after completion of the Three Gorges Dam which is to be the world's largest dam.

Comedy Festival

China's first international festival of comedy art will be held in Central China's Henan Province in May, according to the organizing committee. There will be an array of activities, including cartoon shows, comic dialogues, comedies and acrobatics. Comics from home and abroad are expected to gather in the province for the celebration.

Fujian Festival

As part of the **1995 China Folklore Tour Year** designated by the China National Tourism Bureau Administration, the Fujian festival has been scheduled for October. The festival will focus on ethnic Hakka culture and include folklore performances, artefacts, academic seminars and trade negotiations.

More Folk Customs

Hebei Province plans to host three new tourist attractions this year. In **Chengde,** containing the Chengde Summer Resort, the largest royal garden, there will be a variety of ethnic dances and songs performed by the Manchus, Mongolians, etc.

Wuqiao County will offer a unique opportunity for tourists to watch acrobatic performances par excellence, and discover just why Wuqiao is the hometown and training territory to 1,000 acrobats from more than 30 countries.

Thirdly, **Baoding City** boasts its own unsual speciality: longevity! Here, residents live an average of 6.4 years longer than other Chinese, due to Baoding's tradition of *qigong* (deep breathing exercises), martial arts and a variety of medicinal drinks and food.

Underground Palace

A reproduction of an underground palace from the Tang Dynasty (618-907) has been opened to tourists at Famen Temple, one of China's most sacred Buddhist shrines in Northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

The underground palace, a 21.2 metre long east-west tunnel consisting of seven parts with chambers was first discovered in 1987, when archaeologists were working on the Famen Temple tower foundation.

Relics placed in the front chamber include golden Kasayas, an outer vestment worn by Buddhist monks, and an embroidered skirt of Empress Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty. The middle chamber contains a small marble niche holding *sarira* — burned Sakyamuni finger bones — and the rear chamber precious gold and silver wares.

Prince Lujian and His Second Wife

Prince Lujian's tomb in Henan Province, will soon be open to tourists. This 380-years -old Ming-dynasty graveyard, covers an area of 1.5 hectares, and includes two buildings above ground and two underground palaces, housing Prince Lujian and his second wife.

That's All Folks

Aimed to become China's version of Disney World, the **Hainan World Wandering Paradise** Recreation Park, designed by America's BCA companies, will be partially constructed by the end of this year to usher in the 1996 holiday year. The 66.7 hectares park will have two themes: cultural recreation and physical fitness which contains a garden named "Oriental Health-Preserving".

AIRLINE UPDATES

New Airports

Sanya's **Fenghuang International Airport,** on the southern tip of South China's island province of Hainan has been officially opened to traffic. The airport now handles 10 flights a day.

A successful maiden flight marked the opening of a newly-built airport at **Wuhan,** in Central China's Hubei Province. Wuhan's new airport will serve as an alternative airport for Capital Airport in Beijing as well as Hongqiao and Baiyun airports in Shanghai and Guangzhou respectively.

A new terminal building will be added to **Beijing Airport** in order to raise its annual handling capacity to 32 million passengers. Upon completion in 1997, there will be a passenger flow of 11,500 people per hour during peak traffic.

Taoxian Airport has been promoted to international airport status after expansion, and now operates 42 domestic routes with 237 take-offs and landings per week.

Finally, there is now a **new air route** from **Dalian** in Northeast China's Liaoning Province, to Seoul in South Korea.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Unesco Declares

Excavations of the ancient city, **Jiaohe** in Xinjiang has been recognised by the United Nation's Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation as one of the world's earliest and best preserved ancient earth structure ruins.

Hundreds of precious relics, including a Han Dynasty coin and five **sariras** (fragments of cremated Buddha's bones) have been discovered in the many sacrificial pits. The Jiaohe city site also contains well-preserved streets, houses, temples, pagodas and gates dating back over 2,000 years.

Autonomous Regional Diggings

In **Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region,** Sino-Japanese archaeologists excavated nearly 1,000 pieces of relics, including potteries, gold, copper and iron ware. Archaeologists also found what might have been a grape garden in the ruins. A joint Sino-Franco digging at **Keriya Valley** has listed utensils, woollen products and a fresco, amidst an ancient temple and a residential building found.

A village in **Taobuqi,** Inner Mongolia, has resulted in a well-preserved fortress dating from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). Sections of a rammed-earth wall, bricks bearing inscriptions and some 30 bronze arrowheads, iron ploughshares and ceramic shards were also found.

Xianbei Coffins and Fighting Tigers

A group of tombs believed to belong to the noble Xianbei family, who founded the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534), have been exacavated in Datong City, Shanxi Province. Coffins with colour paintings, green and black glazed potteries, lacquer ware plates, basins and other objects were discovered in the clay or brick burial rooms. The relics include stone lampstands carved in the shape of two warriors each fighting a tiger.

Tortoises and Extinct Ba Group

In Hubei Province, 4,000 year old sites belonging to the extinct ethnic **Ba** people have been confirmed. The **Xianglushi Ruins** occupy an area of 400 square metres and include some 10,000 pieces of stone, bone and pottery articles. Most outstanding, however, are 40 pieces of early Shang Dynasty tortoise shells and two pottery seals belonging to late Shang.

Terracotta Han

A tomb at least 2,000 years old, has been found on Shizishan Hill, Jiangsu Province. Buried inside as sacrificial objects were terracotta warriors and horses that belonged to a king of the Chu Kingdom. Bronze axes, seals, pieces of jade and 45,000 pieces of Han Dynasty coins were also unearthed.

JURASSIC PARK II

Pecking Birds

Two fossils of pecking birds dating back 150 million years have recently been discovered in Northeast China's Liaoning Province. The fossils, lodged in deposits in strata of a lake outside Beipiao City some 270 kilometres west of the provincial capital, are considered as being from the same historical period as those of birds found in Germany in 1862. However, in distinct contrast to the German discoveries, one of the Liaoning birds show to have had no teeth, and it had feathers on its legs. Referred to as the "Chinese Sage Confucius Birds", they share some features with modern birds, and are probably early ancestors, according to Gu Yucai, chief of the provincial Institute of Archaeology.

Triassic Trees

Some 30 fossil trees, dating from the Triassic period of the Mesozoic Age, 200 million years ago, have been found in Shanxi Province, North China. The most bizarre of plants, the trees have thick trunks which taper bluntly to a height of about 14 metres, with their roots bare above the ground. A scientist said: "The fossil tress, standing on a hilly piece of ground 10 kilometres from Changzi County ... were fossilized during the primitive crust and mountain building movement."

High Note

Two "**xun**" — among China's oldest musical instruments — each approximately 6,500 years old, have been unearthed in Inner Mongolia and Liaoning Province.

The Hewa ruins site instrument, outside Dandong City, was made of brownish-red potter's clay. Eight centimetres high, it is in the shape of an egg with a flat bottom and a tiny nipple-shaped airhole on top. The other instrument, with a range of five notes, was found in Xiyuan, Inner Mongolia.

Wind instruments were made by the ancient Chinese to attract birds and beasts for capture, by imitating their singing and howling.

NEXT ISSUE

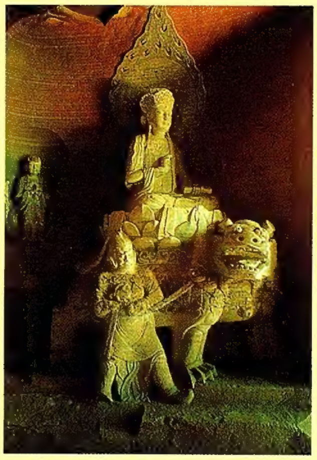
With a slight chill in the April air, this is probably the best time of year to visit China's mountain regions and its villages. In our next issue, we visit Jizhu Mountain in western Yunnan Province, Nanping Village in Sichuan, and the Dong minorities who live in the villages of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Guizhou and Hunan provinces; and we will also be looking at stone sculptures in Dazu Grottoes in Sichuan Basin.

Jizhu Mountain: A Sacred Site of Buddhism

A Visit to Nanping Village in Anhui –The Film Location to *Judou*

In the Land of the Dongs

Stone Sculptures: The Splendid Dazu Grottoes



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Cigarettes

Dunhuang Grottoes built in AD 386-1367 during the Northern Wei and Yuan Dynasties are one of the greatest treasures of Buddhist art in the world.

STIEC

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